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FRANK TOUSEY PUBLISHER, 31 & 36 NORTH MOORE STREET, N. Y.
NEW YORK, April 6, 1887.

ISSUED EVERY WEDNESDAY.

PRICE
5 CENTS.

Vol. I

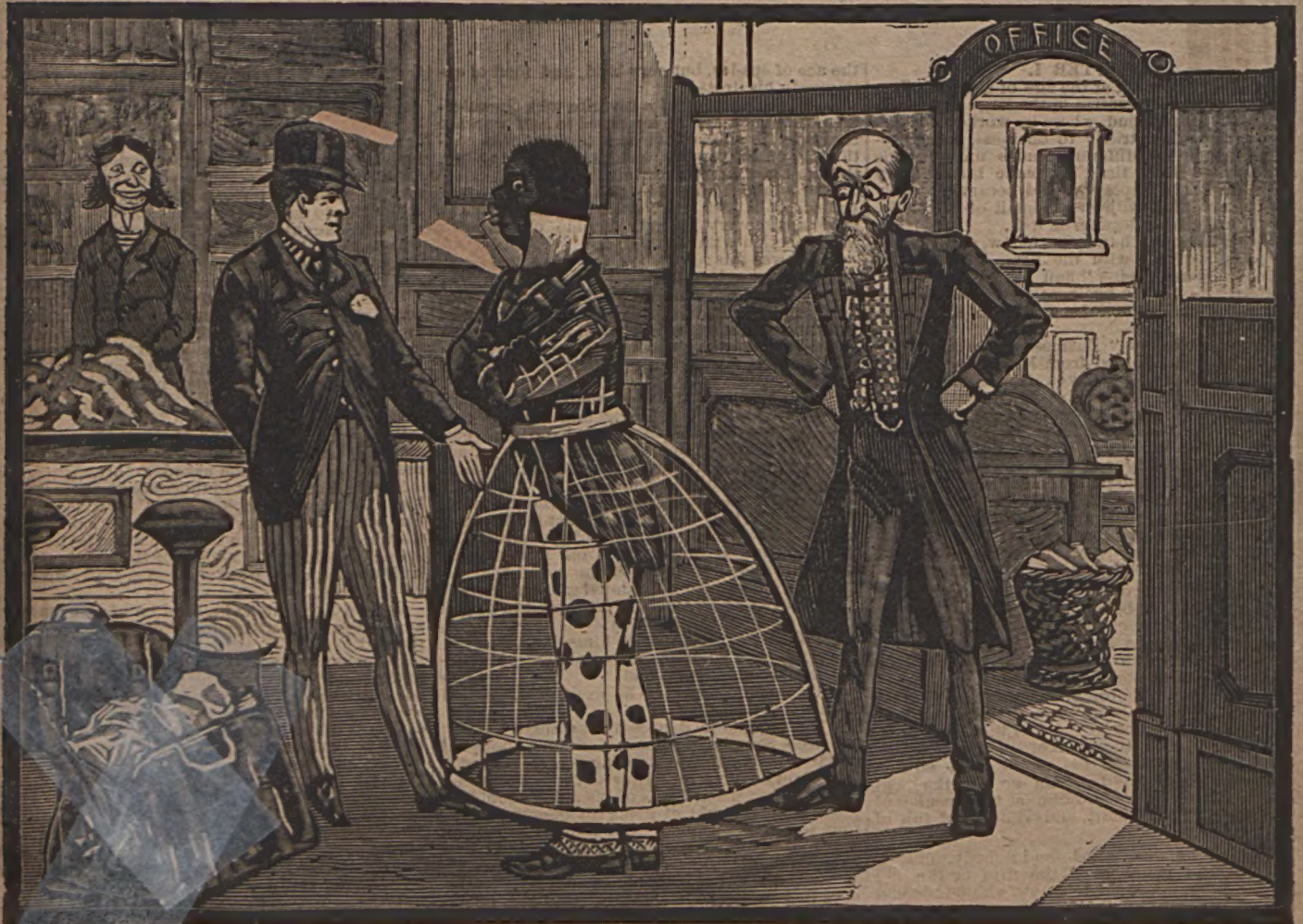
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SAM SPRY, THE NEW YORK DRUMMER;

OR,

Business Before Pleasure.

BY PETER PAD.



"We have here the very latest, which I can sell you at a figure in which there is much money for you. Spot, adjust the five-ounce beautifier." "Yes, sah," and in less time almost than it takes to write it, Spot stood before the astonished merchant adorned in a hoop skirt.

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SAM SPRY, THE NEW YORK DRUMMER:

OR,

Business Before Pleasure.

By PETER PAD,

Author of "The Shortys Out Fishing," "Sam," "The Funny Four," "Joe Junk the Whaler," "Bob Rollick, the Yankee Notion Drummer," "The Shortys Married and Settled Down," "Bob Rollick; or, What Was he Born For?" "Ebenezer Crow," "Stump; or, Little, but Oh, My!" "Chips and Chin-Chin," "Stuttering Sam," "Tommy Bounce," "Tom, Dick, and the —," "Shorty; or, Kicked Into Good Luck," "Shorty in Search of His Dad," "Tommy Dodd," "The Shortys' Trip Around the World," "Tumbling Tim," "Boarding-School," "The Shortys Out for Fun," "The Shortys Out Gunning," "The Shortys' Farming," "Behind the Scenes; or, Out With a New York Combination," Etc., Etc., Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER I.

On leaving school, at the age of eighteen, Sam Spry obtained a situation in the large dry goods house of Jub & Spud, where he worked for two years, attending strictly to business, going rapidly through the different grades until, in this remarkably short time, he made himself very valuable to his employers, and became not only well acquainted with every detail of the trade, but a first-class salesman as well.

He was a bright, handsome fellow, and a prime favorite, not only with the firm, but with his fellow-salesmen, being "hall fellow well met" with them, either in business or pleasure, being as fond of the latter as he was bright in the former.

But his motto was, "Business before pleasure," which he had adopted from Mr. Jub soon after entering his employ, taken in the form of a lecture from that successful old merchant.

"I guess you will do well, Sam," said he to him one day, "although I notice that you are given, like most young fellows, to having fun. Now that is all very well when you have nothing else to do. I used to be as fond of it as anybody, and am now on all proper occasions. But you had better adopt the motto that has taken me thus far so successfully, 'Business before pleasure,' and don't play any more tricks on Spot—at least, not during business hours."

Of course, Sam opened his eyes and looked duly surprised at being accused of putting up jobs on Spot, the colored porter, but Mr. Jub assured him that he knew all about it, only advising him to stick to the motto and give Spot a rest—in business hours, at all events.

Mr. Jub was a thorough business man, but in his youth he had been "one of the boys," and hadn't so far forgotten the fact that he did not sympathize with those likewise inclined, although he impressed his motto upon all his young employees, and so Sam grew in the business, and was, as we find him at the opening of our story, bright, smart, and willing, but full of fun.

Spot, as he was called—and nobody, unless, perhaps, the members of the firm or the old book-keeper, appeared to know whether he had any other name or not—was a character sketch in charcoal.

He was taken into the employ of the firm at about the same time that Sam was, in the capacity of light porter and man of errands.

He was about twenty-five years of age, and was a sort of "Dandy Jim from Carolina," black as

the ace of spades, but very loud, and fond of extremes in his dress.

He was something of a favorite with the salesmen, was Spot, and he appeared to half worship Sam Spry, in spite of the fact that he was continually putting up jobs on him, and making him the subject of a great deal of fun.

It was about the time that our story opens (indeed, it is just what opens it,) that Mr. Jub made a discovery entirely outside of business, in connection with Sam Spry.

And it was this:

He had an only child.

Annie was her name, and she was about sixteen years of age, to say nothing of being one of the handsomest fairies ever seen in New York.

The old man was exceedingly fond of her, naturally enough, for she was sole heir of his fortune and his house.

He saw Sam and Annie promenading one Sunday afternoon on "the Av.," and noticed that she seemed quite as fond of his handsome employee as he did of her. In fact, he had to admit to himself that they were the handsomest young couple on the avenue.

But they both seemed to be a little too new; that is to say, they seemed so to that fond parent, who had never even dreamed of the possibility of losing his beautiful child on a handsome salesman, and so the next day he asked her:

"How did you get acquainted with Sam Spry?"

She looked up at him, and proceeded to be just a trifle startled, and to blush.

Old Jub said "Ha, ha!" to himself.

"Why, pa, I made his acquaintance at dancing-school," she finally said.

"At dancing-school?" he exclaimed, startled in turn.

"Yes, pa, and he dances like an angel."

"Great Scott! a dry goods clerk on a thousand dollars a year going to dancing-school! What is the world coming to? How dare he do such a thing? Why, when I was of his age I should no more have thought of going to dancing-school than to a flying-school. And he dances like an angel, does he? What do you know about how angels dance?"

"Well, pa, not much, only the dancing-master says that we dance like angels," said she, laughing.

"We?"

"That is, Sam and I. And, pa, do you know, I just think he is splendid," she added, archly.

"Oh, you do, eh! How long has this been going on?" he pulled himself together and asked.

"Two terms."

"The —! I saw you on the Avenue yesterday, and you seemed to be going through a dancing-school march."

"Did we look nice, pa?" she asked, laughingly.

"Silence, child! The idea of a puss like you, not out of school yet, asking such a question. Sam is a smart, respectable young fellow, but he has no business going to dancing-school, and much less to dance like an angel with his employer's daughter without his consent. What will people think to see the youngest clerk in my employ walking out with my daughter?"

"But he is real nice and respectable, isn't he?"

"Yes, but there is too great a difference in your social standing. Just remember that, Annie, and never walk with him again unless I give you my consent. It will produce talk, and as for his going to dancing-school, I'll see about that," said he.

"Well, but he has got your motto, pa."

"What motto?"

"Business before pleasure."

"Oh, confound him and his motto!"

"Your motto, papa. And he attends to business, does he not?" she asked, archly.

"Bah! But I object to this outside business of his. He is in my employ, and I must look out for him. Remember what I have said," and then he went to have a talk with his wife, leaving Annie in a delightful blush, for the conversation had touched upon what she had scarcely dreamed of before.

But old Abel Jub had a head on him as long as a mule's, and he understood how to nip things in the bud.

He consulted with his partner, Mr. Spud, as to the propriety of sending Sam out on the road as a drummer, thinking to himself that that would be a first-class way of nipping in the bud—even if it had become a but yet, that might exist or be liable to exist between the young folks. Spud thought just as Jub did, that Sam Spry would be a good one on the road, but the question was, Would he care to go?

Jub said: "Leave that to me, Spud," and soon afterward he sent for Sam to go to his private office.

"Wonder if I am bounced?" mused Sam, as he received the message through Spot. "The old rooster got on to me yesterday while I was walking with Annie. Well, it is just my luck," he added, as he opened the door of Jub's private office.

The old man was all smiles.

And he was a good smiler when there was a good, square occasion for it, as there was now.

The young fellow bowed and looked solemn.

"Sit down, Sam, I want to talk with you," said he, pointing to a chair.

Sam said, "Thank you," and obeyed.

"Sam, how would you like to go on the road?" was his first question.

"Oh, well enough, possibly," replied Sam, knocked out of the idea of his being bounced.

"You have learned the business pretty well, and we want another man on the road to take the Northeastern circuit, and if you think you would like it, as I am sure you will, you can easily multiply your salary by three."

"That would be nice," mused Sam.

"And I don't doubt but that you can do even better than that, for you are smart and fully understand the business. Now what do you say?" and the old man leaned back in his easy-chair, thrust his thumbs in the arm-holes of his vest, and looked admiringly upon his handsome young clerk.

"Well, I'll agree to make a trial trip on one consideration," replied Sam, gravely.

"What is that?"

"That you allow me to go in style."

"How in style?"

"Well, if I am going to make a hit, both for the house and for myself, I must not travel as the other drummers do."

"Why, what do you want—horses and a chariot?"

"Not exactly that; I simply want Spot to go along with me as my servant," replied Sam.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the old man.

"I can make him both useful and ornamental."

"In what way, for heaven's sake?"

"Well, I had rather say nothing about it just now, but if you will let me have him I will take a turn on the road and see what I can do."

"Rather queer. But, all right; you may take him along and make all you can out of the snap."

And thus the matter was settled.

Sam never tumbled to the old man's racket, for as yet he had hinted nothing to him about his being seen with Annie, and so far as the new departure went, he had always rather liked the idea of being a drummer, having heard the others talk of the fun they had met with, as well as the extra pay that a smart man could make in the business.

His fellow-clerks were surprised, but on the whole congratulated him on the change and the hit he had evidently made with the house.

But Spot was a delighted coon.

"Spot, I'll make a man of you," said Sam.

"Golly, 'speck I see a man now," said he, grinning.

"Oh, no, you're only a boy. But I'll make a man—a drummer of you. I'll make you highly ornamental to the house of Jub & Spud—I'll make your services so valuable that you can live in a big brown-stone house up-town and take on airs."

"Don't car nuffin' 'bout dat, Sam. I got no use fo' brown-stone houses, but I like to go along wid you on 'e road," said Spot, earnestly.

"That's all right, Spot. We'll have heaps of fun and see the country. I've got the route all laid out, and we start next week, by which time I will have a suit of clothes made for you that will astonish the natives. So pull yourself together and get ready for the start."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"They have ordered some new trunks and grips for me, and we'll start out like a pair of pets from Pettsville, and don't forget it, Spot."

"Oh, my—oh, yes! An' I go gib dat bes' gal ob mine de cold shake de fust thing I do," he added.

"What do you want to shake her for?"

"Oh, she's only a common wench, an' arn't got no high style 'bout her."

"All right. If you can stand it, I can," said Sam, thinking just then, as he had been thinking all day, of the last night of the dancing-school, where he would meet beautiful Annie Jub.

But old Jub, as before stated, possessed an elongated head.

He proceeded to make himself acquainted with the situation, and of course he found out what nights his daughter went to dancing-school, and so instead of allowing her to go on this particular night, he artfully arranged a theater-party, of which she had to be one, and so she and Sam did not meet as they both fondly expected to do.

He was not the typical stern and tyrannical father. He was simply a "fly" one.

Sam probably felt worse about it than the girl did, for he knew he was going away and she did not, and naturally enough expected to see him at the next meeting.

Well, preparations went on for the start, and Sam's trunks and grips were filled with some of the choicest samples in the store, while he himself had superintended the getting up of Spot's new harness that was to astonish the natives.

Close instructions were given as to goods, and the prices he was to work on, as well as the people he was to call on in his endeavors to sell, while he was to be allowed to use his own judgment in the matter of getting new customers.

And so one fine morning they shook hands, first with the house of Jub & Spud, and then with their fellow-salesmen, from the oldest to the youngest, and then started out on a new life of business and adventure, heartily cheered by those left behind.

Sam Spry looked like a dandy, and Spot like a song-and-dance man, with his funny make-up and his huge standing collar, on which was printed conspicuously the name of "Jub & Spud, New York."

He carried a brand-new gripsack in either hand, and produced a sensation on the street as he followed Sam to catch an up-town car that would take them to the Grand Central Depot, and he was as proud as a peacock.

The passengers in the horse-car laughed, but he pretended not to notice it, while Sam busied himself as they rode along looking over his route and instructions.

"Fut's that?" asked one old Irishwoman of another, as Spot sat down opposite to them in the car.

"Sure, an' it's a mornkey dressed up for a soign," replied her companion.

"I wonder can he spake?"

"Faith, yis. They do be tachin' thim haythin craturers ter do all sorts av things those days. Sure, he's almost as good as a naygur now. Luck at ther airs he puts on," she added, greatly to the disgust of Spot and the merriment of the other passengers.

Two of those passengers were Chinamen, and Spot excited their curiosity naturally enough, although as a race they do not notice much that is going on, and one of them began in his own language, in all probability, to explain to the other what Spot really was, although it sounded something like this, while his index fingers shot upward, or this way and that, as he talked:

"Hi-ki ho, he bo hiki hip hi, jip zip, flop, hi ki yi koo nip bang nick smock rap rat flap me hi ho hew bow."

And this naturally attracted the attention of the Irishwomen from Spot to them.

"An' fut's them?" asked one.

"Them's more haythings wid pigtalls. Sure, but Ameriky is full av all sorts. But them's ther dirty blackguards that get our washin' away from us, an' give people leprosy wid ther change, bad luck ter 'em," replied the other, looking savagely at the Chinamen, who at once subsided.

And so it went on until the car reached the Grand Central Depot, where Sam bought two first-class tickets for Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River road, and soon after took possession of their seats in the coach, greatly to the disgust of the colored porter, whose orders were to allow no other colored person in the car but his own important self.

Just before the train started he approached Spot.

"You are in the wrong car, sir," said he, sharply.

"Guess not, sah—dar's my ticket," replied Spot, showing it to him.

"That makes no difference," said that man of great consequence. "Colored people not allowed in this car."

"Well, what are you doing here?" asked Sam, turning around, for his chair was in front of Spot.

"I see the porter, sah."

"All right; but you want to take a tumble."

"What for, sah?"

"Why, don't you see that he's no coon?"

The porter looked at Spot again.

"He looks very much like one, sah."

"That shows where you are away off. He is a white man, blackened up for an advertising sign. Now go, and don't weary people by showing them your ignorance."

"Pretty good blacking up," mused the porter.

"Why, of course. He's an artist, and you make him tired fooling around here. Go and tell the conductor to start the train, for the time is up," said Sam, waving away that thoroughly astonished colored porter.

Finally the train started, and they were fairly "on the road," the whole world before them.

"You want to brace right up, Spot, if the conductor says any thing to you," said Sam.

"By golly, I habn't got de cheek you hab."

"How so?"

"Sayin' dat I see a white man."

"Well, I have always found you a white man. The color of the skin don't alter that. But you cannot be a George Washington and a drummer at the same time, and it will be my duty to develop your cheek to its fullest limit," said Sam.

And just then the conductor came along. The

porter had evidently told him about Spot, for he sized him up very carefully as he approached.

"Say, young fellow," said he, addressing Sam.

"Your man?"

"Yes, my man, conductor."

"White?"

"White as either of us."

"Made up?"

"Yes."

"What's the racket?"

"Advertisement."

"Drummer?"

"Going to drum, you bet," answered Sam.

"Well, I guess you are a good one. At all events, this fellow has a good make-up. But you must not try to crowd the passengers."

"How?"

"Well, if they kick at him you will either have to wash him or I shall be obliged to put him off or into the second-class car. See?"

"Oh, that's it, eh?"

"That's it."

"See my grips?" he asked, pointing to the new traveling bags on the seat with Spot.

"Yes."

"Well, they are a part of my stock in trade. So is my man here, and the passengers have just as much right to kick at my grips as they have at my other stock in trade here."

"Well, perhaps they will refuse to see it in that light."

"All right. If they kick I'll either wash him or have him go back to the second-class car."

The conductor laughed and passed along in the collection of his tickets, while Sam nestled into his seat and took things calmly.

"By golly, Sam, what a cheek you got!" said Spot.

"And what a cheek you want," replied Sam, and Spot relapsed into an admiring silence.

But the passengers did not object. So far from it were they, indeed, that they appeared to take considerable interest in Spot in his eccentric and gorgeous get up, and many a laugh and funny comment was made upon him.

Finally, they arrived at Poughkeepsie right on time, and while the trunks were being taken to the hotel by an expressman, Sam Spry, followed by Spot, walked, attracting considerable attention, but Spot in his glory, mind you.

Arriving at the Morgan House, Sam went proudly to the hotel register and wrote in a bold, clear hand:

SAM SPRY (and Spot),

Representing Jub & Spud, New York.

Oh, he was doing the thing in style!

Poughkeepsie is one of the most important and most beautiful places on the Hudson river, and as there are many dry goods dealers there, it is no wonder that it is generally the first stopping-place for the New York drummer going on the Northeastern circuit, as Sam Spry was, and naturally enough he calculated on doing some business there, it being rated "a good town."

Nor was this all. This being his first trip, and this his first stopping-place, he felt that he must do something there for his reputation, for he had made several bets with the fellows in the store whom he had left behind, that he would send home an order from the first place he struck.

So, after resting and pulling himself together for a few minutes, he started out, followed by Spot, with the gripsacks, for the purpose of dawdling upon a merchant there by the name of Smith, who had dealt once or twice with his firm.

Smith was an old crank who dealt in odds and ends of almost anything that came under the head of dry goods, and although his customers were few and far between, yet he was rated as a rich man, and everybody wondered how he made his money.

Sam dawled upon him, followed by Spot. Smith met him at the door, suspecting at once, however, that he was a drummer.

"Mr. Smith?"

"Mr. Smith."

"Ah! Glad to meet you, Mr. Smith. My name is Spry—Sam Spry—and I represent the well-known house of Jub & Spud, of whom you have most likely heard, if, indeed, you have not already benefited by dealing with them," he rattled off.

"Oh, yes, I know the house, but I am not in want of anything this trip," said Smith, with the idea of sitting on the youngster at once.

"Ah! but you have not seen our latest novelties. Allow me to show you something new and elegant in a combined suspender and shoulder-brace," said Sam.

"No, sir; I don't want anything in the line of suspenders and shoulder-braces. In fact, I have more of such stuff on hand now than I shall be able to sell for the next year. No, no!"

"Not the slightest doubt of it, Mr. Smith, for

you have none of the latest novelties for which gentlemen of taste and fashion are obliged to go to New York in order to obtain. Spot, show up!" he added, turning to the coon.

"Yes, sah," replied Spot, and after throwing open the two valises, he quickly peeled off his coat and vest, displaying a pair of the "patent combined" fitted to his own exquisite person.

"Give him the motions, Spot."

"But I don't want anything of the kind," Smith continued to protest.

"Wait, my dear sir, until you see what suspensory delights they are capable of imparting. Spot, give Mr. Smith the motions," he added, whereupon the darkey proceeded to show off the advantages of the suspender—what advantages they possessed over every other thing of the kind, and how it was almost impossible for a person to grow round-shouldered while wearing them.

The cranky old merchant was amused and almost delighted with Sam's novel way, and finally concluded to order a gross of them.

And from that article he went on to others, although the man continually protested that he did not want anything, and in the course of an hour he had sold him a bill amounting to more than one hundred dollars, for which he signed an order to be forwarded to the firm.

This was all that Sam cared to do that day. He wanted one order to go back to New York, dated on the very day he left it, just to show Jub & Spud that he was wide awake, and to make the other salesmen in the store "weary" from contemplating the bets they had made with him on the result of his first endeavors, and had lost. So after this hit he and Spot returned to the hotel.

And at the supper-table that night Sam astonished the boarders and patrons, when they assembled in the dining-room, by having Spot stand behind his chair, acting as his valet, fanning him, and keeping off the flies while he ate.

This was too much.

People regarded him as a mogul, although they couldn't understand that big collar of Spot's, or what "Jub & Spud" that was on it meant.

But Sam was perfectly natural and easy, and Spot would no sooner think of smiling than flying, and so, while a few of them got on to it that Sam was simply a New York drummer, others regarded him as a foreign nobleman.

The next morning, at breakfast, the same performance was gone through with. But Sam knew what he was about. He knew that several Poughkeepsie merchants boarded at the hotel, and he wanted to make an impression on them, knowing that nothing takes like novelty.

After breakfast, he started out again, and before noon had sold several large bills of goods, for he was a darling talker, and with the assistance of Spot, whom he used as a dummy or lay-figure to show off many samples of his ware. The truth was, he did it in a new and dandy style, which seemed to take where other drummers could sell nothing, or got fired out for attempting to do so.

"Oh, I'll make those fellows at home sick!" said he. "They'll kick themselves all over the basement when they see these orders come in from my first stand."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" said Spot, admiringly.

"Now, then, I am going to try some millinery stores with some of our corsets," said he, overhauling a trunk for the purpose of getting at some samples.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" chimed Spot.

And gayly forth they started.

Sam did not have the address of any particular person in the business, but that didn't make any difference to him. He had noticed several stores while seeing other customers, and he proceeded to dawn upon the nearest one.

It proved to be the millinery and dress-making store of a cranky old maid by the name of Arabella Bone.

Sam pushed right to the front, and was met by Miss Bone fully half-way; and not exactly liking the make-up—the peculiar git-up-and-get-of-her-callers—she was somewhat curt.

"Well, sir?" she flung out as a salute.

"Miss Bone?" he asked, removing his hat.

"Yes, sir," she replied, and was on the point of saying something still more abrupt; but she saw what a handsome, polite young fellow he was, and simply said: "Yes, sir."

"Thanks; glad to make your acquaintance. My name is Samuel Spry, and I represent the house of Jub & Spud, New York. I have just started out on the road with samples of new goods of a very superior kind, and—"

"And I don't wish anything you may have," she replied, curtly, for she instantly comprehended the fact that this young New Yorker's hard cheek more than balanced his politeness and good looks.

"But, my dear lady, you have not seen our new goods, and when you do, I am positive

that you will change your mind regarding them."

"No, sir; I shall not. I have all the goods I want, and I don't think it at all likely that you have anything better or more novel than I am enabled to find at H. B. Claflin's," she snapped.

"There, my dear Miss Bone, you show at once—pardon me—that you have not seen the latest goods. H. B. Claflin is green with envy at the wonderful enterprise shown by our house in getting new and salable goods on the market. Isn't that so, Spot?" he asked, turning to him.

"Oh, my—oh yes!" he answered, honestly.

"I don't believe a word of it, and when I tell you that I want nothing you have, I hope you will consider it settled, so far as our dealing together is concerned, and not take up any more of my time."

This would have bluffed and choked off anybody but a New York drummer, especially when she turned curtly away.

But Sam Spry had not thought of being bluffed yet, and smilingly returned to the charge.

"Have you ever seen any of the 'J. & S.' corsets?"

"No, and I don't wish to."

"I beg pardon; it will only take me a moment to show them to you. Spot, let me convince Miss Bone that we have the finest corsets in the market," said he; and Spot at once peeled off his coat and vest, and began to throw aside the "combination suspender and shoulder-brace."

"Mercy on me!" screamed the old maid, as she held up her hands and started back. "Go right out of my store this instant, you impudent puppy."

"Beg pardon, Miss Bone. No offense intended. I simply wish to show you some perfection in—"

"I don't want to see it—I refuse to look at it."

"Now, then, just look at that. See how artistically that corset is ribbed—note the felicity with which it is adjusted, and above all—"

"Get out of here!" she cried, wildly.

But by this time Spot had adjusted the article, and stood soberly before her for inspection.

"As I was saying—"

"Get out of here, or I will call an officer!"

"My dear lady, what has an officer to do with a simple business transaction? As I—"

"You have insulted me!" she shrieked.

"I beg pardon, but I had no intention of doing so."

"But you have, you miserable creature. Take that horrible person out of my sight," she cried.

"He is simply my dummy—I use him to show off my goods on," said Sam, suavely.

"Oh, this is unbearable!"

"No, you are mistaken. I—"

But that horrified old maid could stand it no longer. The idea of such an exhibition in her store was dreadful, and so, rushing to the door, she shrieked for the police, and, strange to say, there happened to be one close at hand.

This was an unexpected turn in affairs, and Spot became so frightened that he leaped into his coat and vest without removing the corset, seized the gripsacks, and was on the point of leaving the store, when the officer responded.

And Sam was broken up for the moment, too.

"What is the trouble here?" asked the officer.

"I have been grossly insulted by these creatures, and I demand that you arrest them," said she.

"All right, Miss Bone. Anybody that insults you has got a bone to pick with me," he replied.

"This is all a mistake, officer. I had not the slightest intention in the world of insulting this lady," protested Sam.

"That is an awful lie!"

"I was simply showing her a corset."

"Yes, the horrible creature. Think of that, Mr. Clubman—only think of it!" she cried, and then hid her face behind a perfumed handkerchief.

"Oh, you did, hey!" exclaimed the officer, at the same time turning fiercely upon Sam.

"Simply that, and nothing more."

"Only that!" moaned Miss Bone.

"Only that, you indelicate wretch! How dare you do such a thing? Come along with me, you rascal. Come right down to the court, Miss Bone, and I will take them right before Judge Hump, where they will speedily receive their deserts."

"This is an outrage," protested Sam, while poor Spot looked as though he were going to faint.

"Yes, sir, it is an outrage, and I am glad to hear you confess as much, although you had no need to do so. Come along," and in spite of his protests, Sam was made to occupy one of the officer's hands, while Spot had the other, and in this way they were marched to the station-house, and from there to the court.

Miss Bone was not long in following, for she regarded herself as highly insulted, and brought along several of her friends to witness the triumph of her revenge.

Spot was all broken up.

It was the first time in his life that he had been arrested, and it seemed to him that his young life was to be blasted and his bud of promise to be stepped on by the unrelenting law.

And Sam Spry wasn't the happiest man in the world, either. It was also his first experience in getting "yanked in," and he really did not know just what the outcome of it would be.

The position he found himself in was tough, both in the uncertainty of issue, to say nothing of the laugh that the fellows at the store in New York would be sure to have on him if ever it became known, for, like the majority of practical jokers, he disliked very much to have the laugh on himself.

"Oh, Sam, we've done too much business near," moaned Spot, and it was this very sorrow on the part of his servant and dummy that broke up Sam's own sad reflections, and gave him more nerve.

"Bah! this is nothing, Spotty, old boy," said he, reassuringly.

"Nuffin'!"

"No, we'll get out of the snap somehow, I guess. Perhaps we went a little too far, but it would have been all right if she hadn't been a cranky old maid."

"Cranky! I should say dat she war a crank, an' dat she hab stopped us on de dead center. Oh, my—oh, yes! we's in fo' it, Sam," he moaned.

"Well, don't squeal until you get hit. Just brace right up on your clean record, and that's all right."

"But how 'bout dat gal I gub de cold shake to—won' dey bring dat agin me?" he asked, earnestly.

"Why, of course not. What has that to do with it?" asked Sam, laughing at Spot's fears.

"Won' de judge say dat am ag'in my character?"

"Not if you don't tell him about it. Brace up!"

While this conversation was going on between Sam and Spot, the news of the arrest was spreading, and the court-room filling up with the curious populace, many of whom scented fun, for it was well known that Miss Bone was a crank, and the great question was, How had she been insulted?

Judge Hump came in and took his seat upon the bench, while the court-officer called for order in court.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned Spot.

"Brace up!" whispered Sam, as the judge looked over his glasses at the papers in the case.

CHAPTER II.

THE scene was almost a sensational one.

Judge Hump looked around, and his eyes fell on Miss Bone, and from her, his eyes got around and settled on Sam Spry.

Spot sighed, and murmured: "Oh my—oh, yes!" The judge didn't appear to be a bad sort of a man, being not above forty, and evidently possessed of common sense and some experience in the world.

And, moreover, it was plainly to be seen that he knew Miss Bone, the complainant, who at this moment seemed highly excited.

"Tabathy Bone, come forward," said he. "Samuel Spry and Spot, come forward."

The old girl approached the bar, followed by Sam and Spot.

"Tabathy Bone, you accuse the prisoner of grossly insulting you?"

"Yes, sir, I do."

"In what did the insult consist?"

"I—I trust, your honor, that you will not ask me to explain it to you in public," said she, and she seemed actually about to blush.

"Why not? You have appealed to a public tribunal for justice, and unless it is something of exceeding and criminal nature, I must insist upon your explaining to the court what it is."

"But—but it—it is so delicate, your honor," and she allowed her bangs to drop over her eyes.

"Well, what was it, then? Talk right out, or I shall be obliged to discharge the prisoner for want of evidence against him," said he.

"Oh, judge, you cannot do that!" said she.

"Why not?"

"He's a New York drummer."

"That is against him, I will admit. But the question is: how did he insult you?"

"Must I tell it, judge?" she asked, pathetically.

"Yes, if you expect justice in this court."

"But it is—is so indelicate—how can I?"

"Well, you should have thought of that before you had him arrested and brought here."

"But I—I didn't think I should be obliged to—"

"Nevertheless, you must do so, Miss Bone."

"Well, he came into my store."

"All right. Proceed."

"He announced himself as a drummer."

"Yes, some of them have no shame."

"And when I told him that I didn't want anything

to do with him in the way of business, he—he—but you will not insist, judge?" she added, giving him appealing eyes.

"Most assuredly I shall. Proceed."

"But—but won't you clear the court-room?"

"No, that cannot be done."

"And I must speak right out?"

"Right out, Miss Bone."

"Well, if I must, I must, I suppose," and she stammered and blushed the best she knew how, while everybody listened with all ears for the terrible developments. "Well, when he found that he could not sell me anything, he insisted upon and actually did strip that colored man and showed a—a pair of corsets," said she, with great effort.

"But that horrible colored man—the way he did it," she protested.

"Your honor, I keep this man for a dummy on which to expose the goods I have for sale, including corsets," put in Sam.

"Just think of it, judge!" said she.

"Yes, I have thought of it, and I think that you are ridiculously oversensitive, and have made a very funny exhibition of yourself; but you have done great injustice to this young man in causing his arrest. The case is dismissed," said the judge.

At which there was loud laughter in the court-room, and a general clapping of hands.

"You can go," added the court to Sam.

"Thank your honor," said Sam, and then turn

made, all contributed to make the young drummer not only well known, but popular.

So, when he and Spot arrived at the depot to take the train, he found more than a dozen people who seemed to know and recognize him.

One of them—a big, strapping fellow—approached Sam with a five-inch grin on his mug.

"That was a fine fellow," said he.

"Oh, it was, eh?" said Sam, indifferently.

"Yes; I mean that racket you had with the old gal Bone," he added, laughing.

"Well, yes, it was rather funny."

"But you don't know how funny it really was, because you don't know the old pullet. I tried to court her once, but because I told her I believed in the



Before poor Spot could look out or in that Indian club kicked him like a steam-hammer, and he went tumbling heels over head down the stairs, the worst broken up coon that ever took a flying leap.

"Is that all?"

"All?"

"Yes."

"But isn't it enough?" she cried.

"Well, that depends. Samuel Spry, come up here and let me hear what you have to say for yourself in this matter," and Sam advanced.

"Oh, my—oh, yes, we're gone!" moaned Spot.

"Can you explain your conduct, sir?"

"Oh, yes, your honor, very easily," replied Sam, bobbing up serenely.

"Then do so," said the judge, leaning back.

"Thank your honor for the opportunity. I am a New York drummer, representing the well-known and highly respectable house of Jub & Spud. I came to Poughkeepsie in the course of business, and sold several bills of goods. I called on Miss Bone here, intending to sell her some of our improved corsets, and, in order to show her their prominent advantages over anything else of the kind in the market, I had my man Spot here adjust a pair to his own person, most properly, at which she became wild and whooped for a policeman. The rest your honor knows."

And while making his little speech of explanation, every ear and eye was open, and it was evident that the handsome young fellow had the whole sympathy of the audience.

"Did you do nothing more than that?" asked the court, as he concluded.

"Nothing, your honor. My motto is 'business before pleasure,' and I was simply sticking strictly to business at the time."

"Well, Miss Bone, you hear what he says—that he only attempted to sell you some corsets?"

"But isn't that enough, judge? Only think of the indecency of the thing," said she, blushing.

"I see nothing of the kind. Simply because you wear corsets, was it indecency in this young man to try to sell you some?"

ling to the astonished old maid, he asked: "Cannot I sell you a gross of those corsets?"

"No!" shrieked Miss Bone, rushing from the court-room, pursued by a cyclone of laughter.

Spot gathered up his gripsacks.

"Thank the court, Spot," said Sam.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" replied Spot, bowing, and then he followed Sam out into the air of freedom of which he had despaired only a few moments before.

They started for the hotel, followed by a large portion of the crowd that had laughed so heartily over the result of the trial.

"Well, Spot, don't you see it is all right?" asked Sam, as they walked along.

"Oh, my—oh, yes, Sam! Dat cheek ob yours takes de cake."

"That's all right, Spot. What you want to do is never to weaken," said Sam.

"How dat?"

"You want to brace right up, and put your foot against anything that happens. I begin to catch on, and so must you. Keep the upper part of your head well fixed, and don't lose the grip on your level all the time."

"It's right dat, Sam."

"But you weakened terribly this time."

"Dat war on your account, Sam. Leave me to myself, and I show you dat I am game all de way through," said he, earnestly.

And this put in the day.

But Sam had got in his best work, and when next day came he had only a few other customers to attend to, and after obtaining half a dozen other orders, he was ready to take the train for Hudson, his next stopping-place.

But he did not get away from Poughkeepsie without a slight demonstration, for the story of his arrest at the instigation of Miss Bone, and his subsequent discharge, together with the fun and the talk it had

'naked truth' she said she didn't want anything further to do with me," and he laughed again.

"Well, give her my love, and tell her that she broke Spot up worse than she did me. Didn't she, Spot?"

"Oh, my!—oh, yes!" said Spot.

"Well, good-bye," said Sam, as the train was ready to start.

"Good-bye!" a dozen voices cried as the train started.

"Anything the matter with that?" Sam asked of Spot, as the train moved away.

"Oh, my—oh, no!" said Spot, breathing more freely than he had for some time.

"Well, I should say not! Luck is on our side, Spot, only you want to brace up."

"How dat, Sam?"

"You want to show a little more nerve."

"By golly, I think you hab nerve enough fo' us both," replied Spot, trying to laugh.

"No, I am only moderately supplied with it."

"Oh, my!" he replied, looking at him in surprise.

"Just pull yourself together, and remember what I say, will you?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"All right," and Sam leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes, either for a nap or a think.

Spot also thought, but the burden of his thoughts was to the effect that if he was required to brace up and work up a nerve in any respect equal to that possessed by Sam Spry, his case was hopeless.

He attracted considerable attention, as before, but because they were in an ordinary coach, and there were but few passengers in it, it amounted to but little, and without further conversation they arrived at the quaint old city of Hudson.

Yes, it is a quaint old place, the head center of Columbia county, and about as slow and sleepy as Sleepy Hollow itself.

Sam had often heard the other drummers speak of

it as being a dead-and-alive place, and he made up his mind to wake it up for a little while, at all events.

So he went to the Hudson House, where he again registered as at Poughkeepsie, and Spot, creating quite a ripple of sensation as they walked from the railroad station.

Then he prepared to go out for business. "It's a sleepy old place, Spot, and we must wake it up," said he, as they started out.

"Oh, yes—oh, my!" replied Spot, at the same time wondering how much dynamite it would take to do it. "What they want here is the manifestation of a little New York nerve, and you want to pull yourself together for the occasion."

"Well, I see a putty good puller," said he. "Let us see a sample of it, will you?"

"I'll do my best, Sam."

"All right. We'll see what it amounts to."

The first place they struck was a gentlemen's furnishing goods store, the proprietor of which insisted upon it that he already had more goods on hand than he could sell, even on six months' credit, and wouldn't buy any more if he could get a year's time on them.

But Sam Spry was there. So was Spot, and he put the dealer through in such an artistic way that he captured the dealer and got a very good order out of him for various things, Spot doing his share of the work, and putting in some very good samples of gall and cheek.

But although the man ordered the goods, he didn't feel a bit happy over it. The truth was, he had simply been "chinned" into ordering what he had, and he wished in his heart that he had never seen a New York drummer, and might never see one again.

"Now, business is business all the time," said Sam, after the man had signed the various orders. "and I don't propose to allow any other person in your line to obtain the same advantages that I have given you, or get the same goods."

"Well, that's good of you," replied the merchant. "Oh, not at all. That is one of the rules of our house, for in this way we get customers, and keep them," replied Sam, proudly.

"Very good scheme, I must admit. But there is one other dealer here that I wish you would sell to—that is, if he will buy."

"Indeed! Who?"

"Sam Collin. There is his card, and I would like to have you give him a call while making your rounds. Mention my name to him as a customer of his, and he will probably make it very pleasant for you," said he.

"But are you willing that he should have the same goods, same rates, and all that sort of thing?"

"Oh, yes. We are old friends, and he would have done the same thing by me if you had called on him first. Oh, that's all right. We are rivals in business, but very good friends outside of it. Just tell him that I sent you to him. But he may give you a stand-off, for he is a close buyer, and a hard one to deal with, but don't let up on him. Stick right to him, and you can undoubtedly sell him some goods."

"All right. Much obliged, and you know you will lose nothing by it. By-bye," and Sam started out, followed by Spot.

That dealer in gentlemen's furnishing goods slowly assumed a smile as he watched the young drummer go down the street, and from a smile it broke into a laugh that seemed to have lots of genuine jollity in it.

Sam went from this store to two or three others, gathering in a few orders on his samples, but not doing the rushing business that he had set his heart upon. He found the place too dead to be roused by a drum or a drummer.

But Sam had made up his mind to do the town before applying to Mr. Collin, the friend referred to by his first customer, and so he spent the whole day and a portion of the next in "working" the other dealers in the various lines of goods which he represented with samples.

And yet, after all, in spite of his best efforts, backed by Spot with all his cheek, he sold a smaller bill than at Poughkeepsie.

But there was one man left—Mr. Collin—and he was well heeled for him.

He dawned upon him.

The store was not what he might have expected it to be. In fact, it was a fourth-rate affair, but Sam knew that it is often the case that there is more money made in a place that looks a little off than in a store that is somewhat loud.

So he braced up for a spar deck passage.

Mr. Collin met him with a frown, for he saw at a glance that he was a drummer, one of the beings he hated above all others, especially a regular New York specimen.

"Mr. Collin?" asked Sam, lifting his hat as he approached him.

"Well?" was the only reply.

"I am not mistaken?"

"Not in the name—no."

"Well, sir, I am pleased to meet you. I am the traveling representative of the house of Jab & Spud, of whose reputation you must be well acquainted, even if you have never dealt with them."

"Well!" and the man scarcely moved.

"I had the pleasure of selling a bill of goods to your friend Japson."

"What!" and this time Mr. Collin appeared to be interested.

He was a big man, and looked Sullivanish.

"Yes, and he mentioned you as a particular friend of his, in the same business, and said that you would undoubtedly be pleased to deal with me."

"Oh, he did, eh?"

"Yes, at the same time speaking very highly of you," replied Sam, honestly.

"Oh, he did, eh?" sneered Mr. Collin.

"Certainly."

"Well, you just get out of here," said he, and his brow seemed to darken.

"Of course, only I want to sell you a bill of goods first. Have you ever seen the combination suspender and shoulder-brace?"

"No, and what's more, I don't wish to."

"Just the way Japson talked until he had seen their beauties and great advantages, Spot!"

That was his helper's cue, and off came his coat and vest in a twinkling.

"Go through the evolutions, Spot," and Spot commenced them.

"Oh, confound your suspensory combination! Will you get out of here?"

"Just what Japson said, until I convinced him that he was utterly wrong."

"Jam Japson! Will you get out?"

"Now, Jap was inclined to be the same way, until I convinced him. Perfectly natural, my dear sir—perfectly natural. Spot, proceed."

Mr. Collin was almost paralyzed at the cheek of the young man.

"Dar you is, sah," said Spot, resolved on getting in some of his best work. "Nuffin finer in de way ob a suspender war eber made, sah. Look at de easy set-an' de 'lasticity ob de article taken as a suspender."

"Oh, give us a rest!" said Mr. Collin, and it was evident that he was getting tired.

"I gib you de rest right away. Now, sah; just look at dat auxiliary," said he, bending forward, and then suddenly assuming an upright position again.

"That what?"

"He is referring you to the mechanical adjunct of the simple suspender," said Sam.

"Oh! he is, eh?" sneered the expected buyer.

"Yes, sah. See how it keeps de shoulders back? Makes no difference how much a man want to loaf an' lay off on his chest, dem shoulder-braces keep him plumb up. See how straight I is? Well, two year ago dey used fo' ter call me de black hoop-snake, I war so round-shouldered. Now look at me!"

"Confound you! I don't want to look at you, and I don't want to look at your goods," said the man, savagely.

"Well, how are you on cuffs and collars? I have got some fine samples of the latest styles that I can put you at the very lowest figures," said Sam.

"But I tell you that I don't want anything that you have got or represent. Git out!"

"But how about underwear? I have some of the finest that is imported, or of domestic make, and I can paralyze you on prices. Spot, show up."

"Confound you! I tell you that I don't want anything you have got. Git out!"

"Lemme show you de exceedin' adaptability, 'lasticity an' respectability ob dese yer shirts and draw's," said Spot, now getting his second wind, and coming to the front with additional cheek.

"What!" roared Mr. Collin, scarcely able to contain himself any longer.

"Ah, my man, being an adept in the business, will show you, in the deffest and most approved manner, how much superior our goods are to any others in the market. Peel, Spot."

Spot was actually on the point of stripping himself, in order to show, by putting them on, the elastic and other qualities of the underwear.

"Stop it!" roared the merchant, at the same time looking nervously toward the door, as though expecting to see customers coming up the steps.

"It will only take a moment," said Sam.

"Confound you and your moments! I'll fire you out of here if you don't go."

"Just what your friend Jap said. Eh, Spot?"

"De very same thing! Oh, my—oh, yes!"

That was too much. Japson was his worst enemy, and he had undoubtedly sent these cheeky drummers there to annoy him.

He rushed into the back of his store, and returned with an Indian club just as Spot was getting himself out of his undershirt.

"Now, as I was saying— Look out, Spot!" cried Sam, who foresaw the danger.

But before poor Spot could look out or in that Indian club kicked him like a steam-hammer, and he went tumbling heels over head down the stairs, the worst broken up coon that ever took a flying leap.

Sam Spry grabbed the gripsacks and got out just in time to avoid another blow and to see that exasperated merchant spinning around like a top from the momentum of the club with which he had barely failed to smash him.

CHAPTER III.

"Are you hurt, Spot?" asked Sam, as he recovered his balance and got a look at his demoralized second drummer.

"Is I hurt?" moaned Spot, as he slowly pulled himself together and got on his pins.

"Yes."

"Is I hurt?" he said, again, almost angrily.

"Why, yes."

"Well, if I isn't hurt what am earthquakes fo'?" he asked.

"Earthquakes?"

"Was anybody else killed?" he asked, wildly.

"Anybody but who?"

"But me, Sam," he said, pathetically.

"Oh, you are all right; you are not killed. Say, old man," he called, addressing the merchant who stood, club in hand, at the head of the stairs, looking down at them. "I will open an account in a hornet's bank for you."

"Get out or I'll set a dog on you!" cried the indignant merchant.

"I'll set the law on you," said Sam.

"Let her go. But you want to get away from here, or I'll open on you with a shotgun," said he.

"Oh, my, let's go!" moaned Spot. "Oh, whar am my coat and vest?"

This aroused Sam, and he rushed back, with his hand on his hip-pocket, where he had no pistol at all.

"Say, old man, don't trifle with me," said he, marching back into the store.

Mr. Collin weakened when he saw Sam with his hand on his hip-pocket, and he allowed him to take away Spot's clothes, after which they returned to the hotel, where Spot had a chance to dress.

True, Sam had taken some orders in Hudson, but altogether it was not exactly such a triumph as he would have liked, and as for Spot, he was badly broken up.

But Sam put on a few of his frills, and after mailing his orders back to New York, they took the train for Albany.

"People in these country towns are not used to meeting first-class talent, and, of course, don't know how to treat it," said he, as they were whirled away.

"Oh, Sam! oh, my!" moaned Spot.

"What's the matter, Spotty?"

"My back is so sore. Was it a mule?"

"Where?"

"Dat hit me."

"No—no. Only a man who felt so good over the bargains I had given him that he couldn't contain himself," said Sam, laughing.

"Wal, I should say he couldn't," said Spot, and his big eyes rolled around.

"Only a little exuberance of spirits, Spot."

"Spirits! What was it—whisky?" he asked.

"Oh, no; only animal spirits."

"Shoo, Sam, dat war mo' dan animal spirits; it war wuss den de stern ob a mule. An' if dat's what a man gets when he braces up fo' business I let you do all dat hereafter."

"Oh, you don't want to weaken for a little thing like that, Spot. Brace right up, and don't lose your grip."

"Well, what's a man gwine to do when his spine gets kicked outen him?" moaned the coon.

"Bah! Your spinal vertebra is all right."

"Maybe it am, but how about my spine?"

"Well," replied Sam, laughing, "if it really has been injured, it is too bad; you needed even more than you had. But you're all right," and Sam turned away to read a paper.

Spot got himself as easily seated as possible, for it was not quite so pleasurable for him to sit down as it was before he came in contact with that Indian club.

They rode on several miles, however, Spot humoring the extremity of his spine, and Sam getting into his daily paper, when a tall, gaunt specimen of humanity, very greatly resembling a country clergyman, or a city missionary, approached Sam with a tract.

"Eh?" said Sam, looking up.

"My dear lost friend, the conductor informs me that you are a New York drummer," said he, and he gave a sigh.

"Yes, that's all right. What are you on?"

"Sir?"

"What is your lay?"

"I don't unders'and you," said the gaunt, good man, starting back, and looking inquiringly at Sam.

"What is your racket—what is your graft? Of course I'm a drummer; that's all right—everybody has a lay of some sort; what's yours? Not a poker sharp, I hope," he added, honestly, for he had often heard the other drummers speak of these sharps haunting the trains in clerical garb.

"No, sir, I am a meek and humble follower of the Lamb," said he, turning his eyes up to the roof of the car.

"Oh, you are, eh? Does he know that you are following him?" asked Sam, deeply in earnest.

"I trust so," replied the man, somewhat confused.

"Well, that is all right, perhaps. But if I had a lamb that I thought anything of, and I caught you following him, I'd have you arrested," said Sam, and then he turned to his paper again.

The "humble follower" looked at him in perfect amazement.

"You do not understand me, young man, and I fear that you are on the downward course."

"There is where you are dead wrong, old man. I am on the upward course—to Albany."

"Alas! young man, I fear you are as bad as any of your calling," and he sighed.

"Well, I hope I am no worse."

"So do I; but I think it would be impossible. Will you please read this tract on the 'Fall of Man'?" he asked, handing it toward him.

"Excuse me, but I am reading the news now, and I don't like old stories. Give it to my man Spot, here. He's interested in such things. He lately had a pretty bad fall himself, and probably he would take to the yarn out of pure sympathy," said Sam.

"Young man, think of this flippancy."

"What do you think of it?"

"Alas! it may be the cause of your being thrown into outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, and the worm never dies," said he, sighing.

"Oh, I'm used to the darkness and the dentistry you speak of; but as for the worm that never dies, it strikes me that it would be a bully thing for bait. Fish couldn't get away with it, and you'd never have to dig but one," said Sam, looking up.

"Oh, my poor young friend, I grieve for you."

"Don't do it, old man. It's only a waste of breath; and besides, I'm not a poor young man. Bet I've got more money than you have."

"But your treasures are not laid up where moths

and rust do not corrupt, or thieves break through and steal," said he, and sighed some more.

"You're dead wrong there. My treasures are all in a New York savings bank, where they are handled too lively for rust and moths to catch on, and if thieves can break through those big safes, they are good ones, that's all. No—no, you can't catch me there, for I'm too fly, and seldom get left."

"Oh, you are a flippant young man, and my heart grieves for you," he sighed.

"Don't let it. Brace right up and hoe your own row, and I'll worry through with mine."

"Aah!" and he turned to Spot, who had been listening with open eyes and mouth.

Spot gasped, and looked at him.

as it was after business hours, Sam concluded that the best thing he could do was to make use of the few hours remaining of the day in going over the old city and locating the parties whose names he had on his book, so that he could catch on the first thing when business opened in the morning.

And he did so, leaving Spot to go where his own sweet will might take him.

It was all very well for Sam, for he was not dressed so as to attract quite so much attention as Spot was, although he never stopped to think of that.

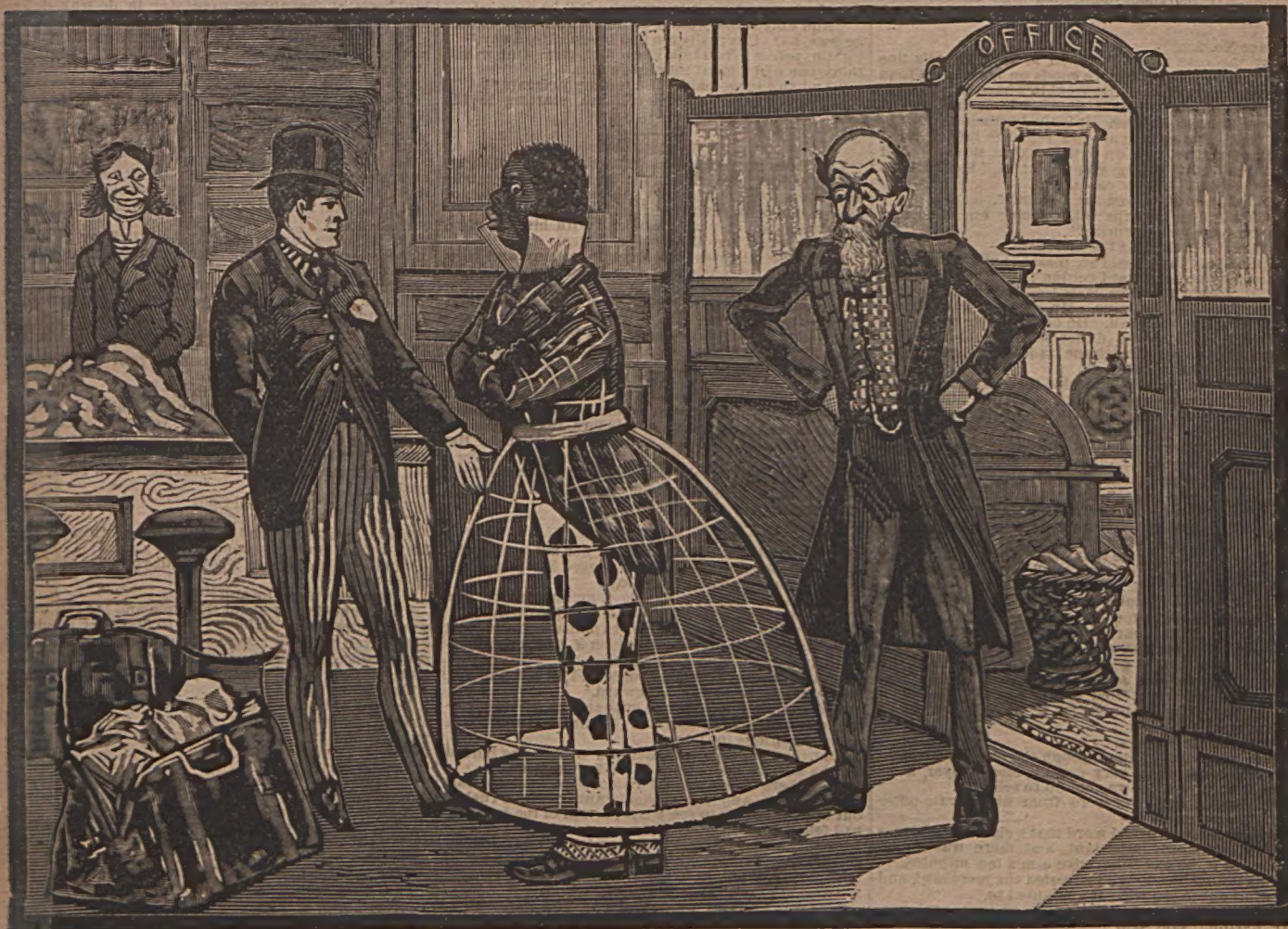
It was nearly an hour after Sam left him at the hotel, and while he was soberly taking in the town, so that he would be sure to know where to go to the

bustle was crushed and the power of utterance knocked completely out of her.

With as little delay as possible, he assisted her to her feet, and, offering her his arm, they started through a cross-street, followed by a loud yell and about fifty boys.

Sam returned to the hotel, laughing, but wondering what ever put that roller-skating racket in Spot's head.

But poor Spot! that was the second terrible blow he had received in a certain portion of his anatomy, and it was with great difficulty that he could walk enough to escort the young lady home from this public performance, and he was only just a little sicker than she was.



"We have here the very latest, which I can sell you at a figure in which there is much money for you. Spot, adjust the five-ounce beautifier." "Yes, sah," and in less time almost than it takes to write it, Spot stood before the astonished merchant adorned in a hoop skirt.

"My colored friend, have you thought of your latter end?" asked he.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned Spot, at the same time thinking of the sorest portion of his body.

"Are you a drummer, my poor fellow—mortal?"

"No, sah; I'se de fier dat go 'long wid de drummer," replied Spot.

"Ah, my poor, benighted fellow-traveler to the unknown shore!"

"Dar's whar you is dead wrong, boss—I'se well acquainted up at Albany. Dat amn't no unknown sho' to me," replied Spot, and Sam concluded that he was getting along with the old piety sharp quite as well as he could himself.

"You mistake me, poor man—I was speaking in a moral sense."

"Oh, I thought you war speakin' in nonsense."

"No, sir. But I am sorry for you. My heart yearns for you. Read this tract; read and ponder."

"All right, boss. I'se great at ponderin'. I got de first prize at school fo' ponderin'." Dat am my greatest hold," replied Spot, taking the tract.

That tract-distributor sighed like an alligator, and concluded to make other tracks—back to his seat, followed or accompanied by the grins of all the passengers who had either got on to the snap or had overheard the conversation.

He was a squelched colporteur, nor was this the first time, as he well remembered, that he had been worsted in trying to convert drummers, and he then and there solemnly resolved to have no more to do with them. They were too fly.

Everything was quiet thereafter until they arrived at Albany, which gave Sam Spry a chance to finish his paper, get an idea of the market, in which, of course, he was greatly interested, and Spot time enough to get through with his tract.

At Albany they put up at the Delavan House, but,

next day, that he was walking down State street when he saw a crowd.

It is one of the most natural things in the world for an outsider to approach a crowd, and Sam took it in.

Spot was there.

He and a young lady of his own color were the center of attraction.

She was dressed almost as loudly as he was, and was only a little better-looking. But she was a very fancy wench, all the same.

They had been practicing roller-skating on the sidewalk, and had attracted a large crowd.

But that wasn't the cause of the excitement.

It appeared that they had been trying to do some fancy skating on the inclined sidewalks of State street, and that the sidewalks got the best of them by at least two majorities.

They had both turned involuntary backward somersaults, and had sat down upon the flags in good time together, but so suddenly, so hard and unexpectedly, that they were still sitting there in a dazed condition when Sam came upon them.

The crowd was yelling and laughing.

Sam couldn't catch on to it at first.

"What are you doing there, Spot?" he finally asked.

Spot looked up mournfully; so did his girl.

"What's up?"

"Oh, by golly! Better ask what's down," and then the crowd laughed some more.

"What put this funny business in your head?"

"Don't know; but it's all knocked out now," said he, slowly and sadly unbuckling his skates.

Then he proceeded to remove the skates from the well-developed feet of his young lady companion, who seemed to have sat down so emphatically that her

But although he limped, he bobbed up quite serene by the next morning ready for business.

"What in thunder were you doing up there on State street yesterday?" asked Sam.

"Well, now, fo' de Lord, dat war de wust," replied Spot, with rather a sorry smile.

"I should say so. How was it?"

"Well, I knows dat young lady. She am de champion roller-skateress ob de world, an' I don't call myself much ob a slouch on de rollers, an' as dar war no rink heah whar we could go an' enjoy ourselves, we jus' took to de sidewalk, whar we had lots ob fun 'till we struck dat slantin' State street. Then we sorter turned ober endwise an' sat down."

"Yes, it looked very much like it."

"An' it feel very much like it—dat is, so far as I am concerned. But we were making the hit ob de day when we sat down, Sam," said Spot, laughing somewhat more cheerfully.

"Well, now, you want to put in some of your best work, and no more pleasure, before business."

"Pleasure!" exclaimed Spot.

Place No. 1—store on Broadway.

Sam dawned upon the proprietor, and so did Spot, carrying the two gripsacks.

He didn't have quite such an elastic walk as he had when he left New York, owing to that Indian club and that unexpected sit-down on the sidewalk the day before. But he braced up quite well, and appeared all business.

Sam went right to the front, as usual, and collaring the proprietor in his bland, business-like way, he succeeded in selling him a large bill of goods before he was aware of it.

And when he came to sign the order he looked aghast almost. He hesitated, but a few words from Sam reassured him, and he signed it without further protest.

"Good-day, Mr. Smacks. I am sure you will be pleased with what I have sold you, and when I come again—as I shall in a few months—I shall call on you with perfect assurance, and shall expect another large order for our house."

He said this as he lifted his hat and left the store, followed by Spot, who also nodded patronizingly and opened his big mouth.

The merchant looked after them in a dazed sort of way. He seemed slightly paralyzed.

"Well, is there anything that beats a New York drummer—and he only a young one?"

He walked back to attend to some customers, and for the time forgot the charmer.

The next merchant he struck was on the same great avenue of trade, and only a few doors above him.

Place No. 2.

But the man wouldn't listen to any of Sam's fine talk. He already had more goods on his shelves than he could find sale for. He wouldn't have it.

"Well, all right," said Sam. "Your business is none of mine, of course. It is the business of both of us to sell. But so long as you refuse to buy of me, I must, of course, pass on to the next customer. And yet I don't mind giving you a pointer," he added, as Spot closed the sample cases.

"What about?" asked the merchant.

"Oh, nothing, only the other people on Broadway say you have no enterprise."

"What!" exclaimed the merchant.

"Don't say that I said so, please, but they told me before I came here that I couldn't sell you a dollar's worth. I didn't believe it, but it's all right now. It is your business, not mine. Mr. Smacks advised me not to call on you at all. He bought a big bill of me, and said: 'Let the old dufer sell his old-fashioned stuff if he can—we'll catch the trade of the better class right away from him.'"

"Did he say that?" demanded the merchant.

"Hush! please don't say that I said so. Good-day. We may be able to do business some other time," and again Sam started to go.

"Wait a moment. Just let me look at your samples again," said the merchant.

Sam stopped and consulted his watch.

"I have only half an hour, my dear sir, before I have to fulfill an appointment with Strabo & Co."

"Well, never mind. If Smacks said that about me I will buy a bill of goods of you."

"Thanks; but tell me that what I told you, when I supposed we could not deal, shall not be repeated," said Sam.

"Well, but I am not going to let him get all the trade in fashionable goods."

"Sir, I admire your taste," said Sam; and thereupon he went for him and succeeded in selling him quite a large bill of goods, after which he bade the man good-bye and started for a store further uptown, where he calculated to sell a bill of goods of a somewhat different order, for it was a regular dry goods store at retail.

This was Mr. Barton.

Sam had heard of him through the other drummers for the house as a very cranky, close buyer, if he bought at all, and he was bound to sell him.

Mr. Barton sent out word from his private office that he was busy.

Sam politely returned word that unless his business was uncommonly important, and there was much money in it, he had better give him a few minutes.

This naturally enough interested the merchant, and he went out to see what it amounted to.

"I hope I have not put you to any inconvenience, Mr. Barton," said Sam.

The merchant glared first at Sam, then at Spot.

"Well, what is it?" he finally asked.

"I represent the house of Jub & Spud, New York."

"Oh, you are a drummer, eh?"

"A commercial traveler, vulgarly styled drummer. But I have some very fine new goods—the latest in the market—and in coming to Albany I am directed to wait on you first, as being the representative man in dry goods and novelties here. You are of course aware that hoop-skirts are coming into fashion again."

"Well, I see something about it in the fashion papers."

"Yes, sir; and you will soon have calls for them. We have here the very latest, which I can sell you at a figure in which there is much money for you. Spot, adjust the five-ounce beautifier."

"Yes, sah!" and in less time almost than it takes to write it, Spot stood before the astonished merchant adorned in a hoop-skirt.

The man looked at him through his glasses.

This was surely a new style of drumming.

"I use him for a dummy in order to show how quickly and easily they are adjusted," said Sam.

"Well, young man, I guess you take the cake," said he, after a while.

"And I would also like to take your order, for that will be on a par with your standing in our house, cash at thirty days," said Sam, and then he began to show him other kinds of goods.

The result was that he sold him a large bill, which he probably would not have done had he not had Spot along with him.

And so he went through Albany, and in two days sent back to Jub & Spud orders enough to astonish his fellow-salesmen and interest the firm in him wonderfully.

Old Jub was exceedingly well pleased with the young man, not only with his success thus far as a drummer, but at the success of his little scheme in separating Sam and his daughter so effectually, and before any of Cupid's mischief had been done.

But Annie missed Sam from the dancing-school

and the skating-rink, where she had met him two or three times by appointment, and naturally enough she made some inquiries respecting him of mutual friends, which led to her finding out the truth.

And one evening at dinner she asked her father where Sam was, for she half suspected something.

"Oh, he got so wild that I had to send him away," Jub replied, carelessly.

"Wild? Send him away? Why, if he had been so bad as that I shouldn't have thought you would have sent him out on the road as a drummer."

"What! Who told you he was on the road?" asked Jub, starting suddenly and looking at her.

"Kate Spud told me," said she, quietly.

"Oh, well, he may make a very good drummer or a very bad one. I can't tell which yet," he growled.

"And only think what a divine dancer and skater he was, pal! It is really too bad to send him away."

"Oh, pshaw! You talk like a fool, girl. One would think you had a great interest in him."

"And so I have, papa. He is simply elegant!"

"Great Goliath!" roared old Jub, starting to his feet.

CHAPTER IV.

Yes, Sam Spry got through with Albany all right, although Spot was not made as happy as he might have been, for there seemed to be a combination of circumstances working against him, as evidenced by his sudden and emphatic downfall with his girl while they were showing off on roller-skates.

And after business was over in Albany and they were to take the early morning train for Troy, Spot concluded to pay a visit to the young lady of the salmon hue to see how she felt after her sudden and unexpected downfall.

He had known the young lady in New York, where she had been a great masher among the ebony sports and high-toned sole leather dandies, and he regarded himself as one of her greatest favorites.

Indeed, she had manifested as much by going out roller-skating with him in public, but he soon found out, if he had never known it before, that the course of true love never runs smooth, whatever be the shade of color.

He went to her palatial mansion on Pearl street. He ambled to the fourth floor in search of the honey of his existence.

She was at home.

So was her "steady company."

He was trying to console her on her fall, and at the same time show her wherein it served her just right, for going out with another fellow.

He was just getting in his reprehendatory fine work when Spot presented himself at the door.

There was a word or two of explanation, and then there was something with meat on it that came suddenly in contact with Spot's nose.

Spot seemed to forget his politeness all of a sudden, for he went down stairs backward.

And not only that, but he appeared to be trying to find out whether his head or his heels could break down partitions the faster.

And then, after experimenting awhile, he landed all of a heap at the bottom of the first landing.

Then there arose a wild commotion in that Pearl street palace, and other inhabitants thereof rushed out of their rooms to see what portion of the building had fallen down.

They saw Spot as he was trying to pull himself together, and just then his rival shouted from the top of the landing:

"Run him out! He am a thief!"

That was all there was required. The denizens of that Pearl street palace were equal to all the rest, and they went for poor Spot.

They threw pottery at him.

They flung bricks and brie-a-brac at him.

They emptied slop-pails upon him.

They yelled their indignation and they manifested it.

But Spot was not inclined to stand that sort of thing all day, or any longer than he could get out, and he made lively work in getting.

And yet when he reached the sidewalk he did not look entirely happy, or like a man at peace with the world.

In short, he looked weary; and as he wiped his bleeding nose and headed for the hotel, he was not made any happier by a crowd of boys who followed him, or by the suspicious policeman who collared him and insisted upon knowing what had happened.

But he finally got clear, and reached a down-cellar barber shop and bath-room, where, after an hour or two spent in improving himself, he came forth, looking quite well, with the exception of his swollen nose, and he proceeded to the hotel.

He did not see Sam until it was nearly train-time the next morning, when he met him, grips in hand, at the depot, ready to start for Troy.

"What's the matter with you, Spot?" asked Sam. "You look as though you had been run through a threshing-machine."

Now, Spot was not a colored George Washington. He knew that he looked bad, but he had no idea of explaining why he did so—at least, not to Sam.

"Oh, dat am nuffin', Sam," said he.

"Nothing?"

"No."

And he attempted to smile, but his nose and lips were so swollen that in attempting to do so his mouth puckered up and stuck out in a most painfully comic way.

Sam could but laugh in his face.

"What hit you, Spot?"

"A mule, if you mus' know."

"A mule!"

"Yes. A mule in a cart war runnin' away wild a

beautiful colored girl. Def war lookin' her in de face wid a horrid grin. I flung myself into de rescue. I seize dat firey mule by de ears. Wid all my strength I flung him on his haunches, an' de girl war saved," said he, the best he could.

"Great act, Spot; but how did that break you up in such a way?" asked Sam.

"De girl war rescued."

"Yes."

"She fall on her knees an' offer to marry me fo' sabin' her young life."

"Well?"

"Den dat mule he turn on me. He seemed mad because I sabe de girl. He kicked himself outen dem shaves an' rope-harness an' go fo' me. He fired his hin' heels at me, an' my nose war in de way, dat's all," said he, with a sigh.

"Well, Spot, that is one of the most romantic ghost stories I ever listened to."

"Fact, Sam."

"Why didn't you marry the girl then and there?"

"'Cause me sells mo' fo' credit den fo' cash. I war willin' to gib her time," said he.

"And give me a ghost-story. Get on board," he added, as the conductor called out: "All aboard!"

Not another word was exchanged between them until they reached Troy, where Sam at once pitched right into business, although Spot's swollen nose and lips made him look so comical that he attracted general attention.

But he sold a very fair bill of goods in Troy, in spite of the crowd of boys and curious people who followed them on account of Spot.

Indeed, he was funny enough in looks for anybody to follow. But he was sad; yes, even while Sam was using him for a dummy.

"How you make out?" he ventured to ask, after they had got through the day's work.

"Very bad; and all on account of your bad form," replied Sam, reproachfully.

"How about dat?" asked Spot.

"How about it! Didn't I take you out as a dandy nig to show off goods on? Well, you have succeeded in making a burlesque of the whole business, and a guy of yourself. What you want to do is to pull yourself together and swear off drinking," said Sam, earnestly.

"Drinkin'!" exclaimed Spot.

"Yes."

"Sam, you know dat I neber drink a drop in my life," replied Spot, reproachfully.

"I always thought so, Spot, until you gave that terrible stiff."

"What you mean by stiff?"

"That ghost story about the mule and the rescue of a fair young dusky maiden. Up to that time I had regarded you as a sober man—as an auxiliary that no respectable drummer need be ashamed of. But, alas! all is changed now," said he, pathetically.

That broke Spot all up.

He reasoned with himself, and finally concluded that he had overdone the matter of explanation regarding his condition at the time he met Sam in the depot.

And he was sad.

But they got through Troy all right, even if Spot did not think so.

A short horse is soon curried.

And the next day they were to continue north, their next stopping-place being Syracuse.

But this was to be a night in Troy.

Troy—good as gold, and Troy weight.

Sam Spry said to Spot, after supper:

"Now, look here, young fellow: what you want to do is to go to bed. You don't want to be fooling around Troy to-night, or another mule may get at you. Mules are dangerous, Spot."

"Dat am so, Sam. I stay in," he replied.

"See that you do. And you want to get some arnica and things to work down that mule kick."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

This seemed to settle the night's business, so far as Spot was concerned, but really he had no notion of staying in. There was too much fun to be had in Troy, and he knew it.

He kept his eye open for Sam, but never seeing him, he took it for granted that the young drummer had gone to bed to rest and brace up for the next day's work in Syracuse.

So he stole softly out by himself, in order to catch on to any little amusement that might fall in his way.

It is a busy city, is Troy. They are all workers by day, but at night there is always some fun to be found by those who want it.

Spot was looking for it.

And he had not been out long before he discovered that there was a skating-rink in town, which constituted one of the greatest attractions, and, being an expert on the "rollers," he concluded to take it in on the strict Q. T.

He found a great crowd of all kinds there, black, white and all shades.

That was good enough for him, and he lost no time in hiring and getting on top of a pair of roller-skates.

And, as stated in the preceding chapter, Spot was no slouch at the pastime, and he at once created quite a sensation, both by his sensational skating and his fancy rig.

Sam Spry was also there, and he got on to him before he had been once around the rink, and he kept shady just to see what he would do, although he had on skates himself, and had gone there for the purpose of enjoying himself.

Spot was not long in finding out that he was making a sensation by the introduction of some of the New York fancy figures he had learned, and when one of the managers went to him for the purpose of finding out who he was, that he might satisfy those

who were asking about him, Spot gave him to understand that he was a rich Cuban planter, just happening to be stopping in Troy that night, and there for the purpose of a little enjoyment and exercise.

This information soon spread, and Sam heard it with the crowd, while Spot gyrated over the rink, doing his most fancy, and putting on frills that soon made him the laughing-stock instead of the wonder of the rink, although that satisfied him as well as anything else.

However, quite a crowd followed him around, at tempting to learn his fancy figures, and not a few believed him to be a New York skater up there in disguise for a little lark.

This belief finally grew so strong that several of the

and her disgusted beau escorted her from the rink just as soon as she recovered.

Spot finally opened his eyes, and the first person they rested on was Sam Spry, who had followed anxiously to ascertain how badly he was hurt.

"Well, Spot, I guess you had better go home now," said he.

But Spot had not recovered fully enough to take in the situation. His eyes rolled wildly around, and the stars had not all gone out of his skull.

"Who fro dat house on me?" he finally asked, and then everybody laughed some more.

"Nobody. You ran into the house yourself, when I told you to go to bed."

"Oh, my! Oh, yes! Am dat you, Sam?"

Somebody mailed one of the papers to Jub & Spud, and they received it by their afternoon mail. It also created a laugh with them, and before night it was known to everybody about the place, while in Troy the poor girl, whose enthusiasm had led her into believing that Spot was only blackened up for disguise and gladly took him for a skating partner because he was the best one in the rink, was laughed at by all her acquaintances, and swore off on rink and roller.

"Just as I expected," muttered Mr. Jub, at the dinner-table that evening.

"What is it?" asked his wife, and naturally enough his daughter looked up at him.

"Oh, that Sam Spry has got himself into a disgrace



"Stop her! stop de train!" he yelled, and in his eager flight he ran into an Italian peanut vender, upsetting him and his stock in trade, while half a dozen employees shouted to him to stop, that it wasn't train time. But on rushed Spot.

lady skaters smiled on him, and presently he offered his hand to one of them and she accepted it, fully believing that he was some renowned roller-skater in disguise.

This felicity lasted for about ten minutes, when his triumph began to make him dizzy, and he attempted to do more than he really knew how.

He was a good general skater, and could do several things that were new to the Trojans, but he forgot to remember just how much he really could do.

His fair partner, however, was delighted with the escort of her disguised champion, as she really believed him to be, for she knew she was the envy of every other girl in the rink, not one of whom had a partner who could compare with him, and as for her beau who had taken her there, he skated about as gracefully as a pair of tongs.

But, as before stated, his success was so great that he couldn't rest under it. He had to try to do something greater still, something he had seen other fancy skaters do.

It was the same old story. His legs got unexpectedly mixed up and he landed on his head, mixing his frightened partner up quite as badly as he was himself.

But fortunately she fell on top of him and probably saved a broken head, while the shock he received knocked the wind completely out of him, and he lay there like a log while the girl's friends hastened to her rescue.

Nor was that the last of the good offices, for Spot was taken to a retiring room, limp as a rag, where restoratives were applied.

These restoratives consisted mostly in cold water, which speedily developed the fact that he was not a white man in disguise, but a real negro.

The girl had escaped unhurt, but she fainted at this discovery, and the laugh was up at her expense,

"Well, somewhat. A nice figure you have been cutting here, haven't you?"

"Cut my head de wuss, I guess," replied Spot, sitting up and taking off the skates which had brought him so much glory and confusion.

"A nice Cuban planter you are, aren't you?"

"It war only a lark, Sam."

"Well, you just get out of here and go to bed, as I told you to do two hours ago."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" sighed Spot, as he walked from the rink, rubbing his head.

The incident created much amusement, and Sam Spry became in turn a genuine hero of the rink, and showed them how to execute many difficult figures that they had never known before, and it is but little to say that he had the handsomest and best lady skater for a partner, and that he spent an enjoyable evening, retiring in ample time to get a good start for business the next morning.

But Spot was too badly broken up to be good for much, although he would not complain, and took the gripsacks and silently followed Sam in his rounds, looking like the last rose of summer, with a very bad bloom on himself.

He got through the day as well as he could, and then made quick work of going to bed. No more skating-rink for him!

The next morning he was feeling more like himself again, and Sam managed to get through with his work in time to take the afternoon train for Syracuse, having sent home a few orders, but not so large as he expected.

But the funniest part of the snap was that Spot's doings at the rink were made the subject of a decidedly humorous article in one of the Troy papers.

There was a plenty of material for it, and the reporter who had been present wrote it up to the queen's taste and it set the whole city laughing.

ful scrape up in Troy, and the papers are full of it," said he.

"Into what sort of a scrape?" asked Mrs. Jub, while Annie's face paled and flushed alternately.

"Oh, at a skating-rink up there. You know he skates like an angel," he replied, casting a very significant glance at Annie. "And he has got the firm's name mixed up with him in the wild escapade in connection with the negro man Spot. We shall probably discharge him, for Mr. Spud is even more indignant about it than I am."

He looked at Annie again, but she pretended not to hear what he said, and in spite of the glow on her beautiful face, she remained silent until after the meal was finished.

Jub chuckled to himself, for he concluded this had sickened her of Sam Spry, even if she only had a passing fancy for him.

"Great head!" he mused, and then retired to the library to indulge in a cigar and his evening paper.

In a little while afterward he heard some very merry laughter up-stairs, in which the voice of his daughter Annie was taking a leading part. Finally, he sent for his wife and asked her the occasion of so much hilarity, and she told him that one of the Spud girls had come over to read Annie something out of a paper.

"Must be deucedly funny," muttered Jub, as he returned to his own paper.

Yes, that was what the girls were laughing about, a funny piece in a paper. And it was that very Troy paper containing the account of Spot's escapade at the roller-rink, although it only mentioned Sam in the most complimentary terms on account of his graceful and expert skating, and speaking of Spot as his colored attendant who had created all the fun.

Mr. Spud had taken the paper home for his wife to read, and Annie's chum managed to get hold of it.

This accounted for the hearty laughter up-stairs, as it also, at the same time, convinced Annie that her father had some object in view in sending Sam away, and of speaking of him in the way he had.

But when old Jub found out the nature of that funny story and what it really was, he was mad enough to kick himself around the block.

But let us skip back to Troy again.

Sam and Spot were in the depot waiting for the Syracuse train.

Trains were starting, backing, shifting in a most bewildering way, in what is called "making up," and Sam was walking up and down the platform, while Spot sat on one of the gripsacks in meditation somewhat, but more than in watching a handsome colored girl, whom he evidently wanted to mash.

Spot was naturally a masher, but since Sam had fixed him up in such fancy style, he was more on it than ever before.

Sam was walking up and down, and while doing so the train he was going to take was backed into the depot, and he overheard the conductor say to the engineer:

"Bill, we have got to take on those two extra cars ever there on the side track. Go up to the switch and back down to them."

The engineer grunted something and turned to the throttle. This caused the engine to grunt in turn. Sam saw a chance for a little fun.

He leaped upon the platform of the rear car. Spot was watching him and started to his feet. The train was moving slowly out of the depot.

"Hurry up!" shouted Sam.

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" whined Spot, and seizing the two gripsacks, he started after the receding car as fast as he could go.

"Stop her! stop de train!" he yelled, and in his eager flight he ran into an Italian peanut vender, upsetting him and his stock in trade, while half a dozen employees shouted to him to stop, that it wasn't train time.

But on rushed Spot.

Also on rushed the train.

He tumbled over two or three other people in his mad flight; but still he fell behind.

Finally he tumbled heels over head, very badly mixing himself up with his gripsacks.

But he came to grief, and was just pulling himself together and separating himself from the nearly ruined grips as the train, having gone over the switch, came slowly back again.

"Oh, dey come back fo' me, eh?" he said to himself. "Serve 'em right. I make 'em go way back to de depot fo' me," said he, and clutching the gripsacks, he started at a leisurely walk back to the depot.

There he found the train in waiting, with at least ten minutes to spare before regular time.

He went puffing up the platform, where he found Sam walking quietly up and down.

"How 'bout dat—when dey start?" he asked.

"In about ten minutes. What the deuce were you running after that car for?" asked Sam.

"Didn't you tell me to hurry up?"

"No. I told you to 'Hold up.' Spot, you are crazy. I shall be obliged to send you home," said Sam, turning away as though disgusted.

"By golly! Maybe I don't understand de English language. You say 'hurry up,' didn't you?"

"No—no. I said *hold up*. You are getting away off, Spot. That accident in the roller-rink has broken you all up. But the train is ready now. So get aboard and keep very quiet. You haven't got your strength back yet," and Sam led the way into the car.

"By golly! dat am de wust!" muttered Spot, as he followed him.

PART V.

But at length they run away, leaving Troy for Syracuse.

Troy had been a scene of much tribulation to poor Spot, although Sam Spy, both in business and pleasure, had done well there.

Spot, however, was glad to get away from the place. It had been too much for him; too much from first to last, and he began to argue the question in his mind whether he was having as much fun as he was enduring pain by this outing.

Scarcely a word was spoken until they reached Syracuse at nearly midnight. Spot really hadn't anything to say, and Sam was bravely thinking of the future.

Nearly every drummer stops at the same hotel in Syracuse, and Sam was not an exception, for he knew all about it, and he could count make himself solid with the landlord at least, by referring him to his friends who had often stopped there.

This he proceeded to do as soon as he had made his way to the place, and he was given a grand, first-class reception by the landlord.

"But, say, who's de coon?" he asked, pointing to Spot, who stood like a statue with two gripsacks.

"Oh! that's all right. That's my coon," said Sam, laughing. "Yes, that's all right."

"Extra style?"

"Right to the front?"

"How do you work him?"

"Carry grips and posture for samples."

"How?"

"Well, I work him for corsets, hoop-skirts, improved stocking-holders, patent busties, and all that sort of a thing. See?"

"Oh, yes—Dummy?"

"Caught it right, landlord," said Sam.

"Good for you! You have got one the best of all the drummers who ever came to Syracuse, and I guess you are a good one."

"I try to be," said Sam, laughing.

"Let her go, Sam. There's nothing too good for you," said the landlord in reply.

"Thanks, only don't leave Spot out."

"Oh, no. Spot must come in somewhere," said he, laughing.

"Oh, yes, *somewhere*," and he hurried away to order supper.

"Look here, Spot," said Sam, after they were left alone, "there's a snap here about you."

"Snap! It's been nuffin' but snap on me ever since I started out. What's up now?"

"Oh, nothing, only the landlord will have it that you are some suspicious white man blackened up."

"Dat's what I get goin' round wid you," said he, in a tone of disgust.

"Ah, but you know you are naturally rather a suspicious character."

"How dat?"

"Well, on account of your good clothes, it may be. But I'll tell you how it is here," said he, looking carefully around.

"How?" he asked, also looking wild, for, on account of Sam's queer looks, he began to feel a trifle ticklish.

"Well, you know it is very important for my business that I stop at this hotel, it being the resort of all the merchants in Syracuse. But this is how it is. The landlord has never seen me before, and he rather suspects me on your account."

"How dat?"

"He thinks there is something crooked."

"Oh, my—oh, how!"

"He thinks you are a white man blackened up, as I said before. But I have offered to have you put into a bath-tub, soaked and washed, just to convince him that you are what you appear to be. Will you agree to it after supper?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"All right. He has consented to let us eat at the same table, because it is after hours, and there will be nobody else in the dining-room; but after you have eaten supper, you will have to be put in soak, in order to convince him that you are really what you appear to be before he will allow us to remain here. See?"

"Oh, yes—I do anything fo' de good ob trade," replied Spot, thoughtfully.

"All right," said Sam; and just then the clerk of the hotel announced the late supper ready.

Sam had a few moments' conversation with the landlord, and then went into the dining-room, where he and Spot partook of the hotel hash.

"Well," said the landlord, as they came out of the dining-room, "do you weaken?"

"No," said Sam, seemingly offended.

"Well, what do you propose—to send this person somewhere else, or have him blacken up my sheets and pillow-cases, or will you both go?"

"No; but if you will have it that my man here is white, and blackened up for some illegal purpose, he is willing to go into soak, provided you will treat him if he comes out all right."

"That will be perfectly satisfactory, and I agree to his terms. Come right this way," and that fun-loving landlord led the way to the bath-room.

Spot followed, but he didn't like it for a cent. It seemed to him to be little, the meanest thing he had ever heard of in the land of the free and the home of the brave. But he was willing to do almost anything for Sam's sake, although to be put in soak—to take an actual bath—was very repugnant to him.

But he followed on, and Sam went along with the over-particular landlord, ostensibly to see that his man received fair play.

The bath-tub was half full of pretty hot water, and a faucet of the same was still running.

"Now, all I want to convince me that this is really a colored man in your employ, and not a crook in disguise, is that he strip and lay in that water for half an hour," said the landlord to Sam.

"All right; but you must treat him to a hot drink if he comes out just the same."

"Of course; I only want to convince myself, for I have a very toney lot of customers stopping here, and I don't want to make any mistake."

"All right; but if it wasn't so late, you bet I wouldn't submit to it. Peel and go to soak, Spot."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" said Spot. "But you go out, and I let you in when I get under de water."

"All right. Go ahead," said the landlord, and he and Sam left the bath-room and went up-stairs to get some lemonade.

Not five minutes elapsed, however, before there came shouts from that bath-room.

"Oh, my! Put out dat fire! Oh, my, whar am you, Sam?" and choking down their laughter, they hurried to see what the trouble was.

"Well?" asked Sam.

"Well! I should say it *war* well; *seell* done," whined Spot, dancing around the bath-room.

"Ah! good thing, Spot, for you always were a little raw," said Sam, laughing.

"Raw! What you try to do—make sotp ob me?" he demanded, indignantly.

"That is all right, Spotty, old boy. Never mind if the water was a little hot, it has given you something you haven't had in many a long day, a bath, and besides that, it has convinced the landlord that you are of the genuine colored blood, and no cork-rubbed impostor. Are you convinced?" he asked, turning to the landlord.

"Yes, I guess he is all right," he replied.

"Yes, all right—if de skin don't come off," said Spot, getting into his shirt.

"Oh, your skin will hold water yet, but that is not all, for, according to the landlord's agreement, it was to hold a treat at his expense. Eh, landlord?"

"Certainly I'll treat," and they left poor Spot to dress himself while a grin stole slowly over his mug.

That was certainly one on him, but as Sam had said, it was a good thing, because he had always been afraid of water in large quantities, that is to say, quantities large enough to bathe in, and the result of the racket was that he got probably the first bath he ever had in his life.

Afterward the landlord treated him, as he had agreed to do, and Spot could but admit that two such washings made an epoch in his life; indeed, he never tumbled to it at all that there was a racket at his expense.

But, feeling weary, he shortly afterward went to bed, leaving Sam and the landlord and a few friends enjoying themselves.

The next morning Sam found three or four letters awaiting him. One was from his house, congratulating him on his success thus far, and encouraging him to keep on, together with some instructions regarding the prices of certain goods.

And one was from Dick Chilly, his old chum, and the leading salesman at Jub & Spud's, telling him of the bets he had won on the sales he had made, and of the laugh they had all had over Spot's escapade at Troy in the skating-rink.

But there was yet another letter—a dainty little thing that smelled of roses.

He looked at it and smelled of it, and yet could not guess who had written it.

So he broke the wrapper, and read as follows:

"FRIEND SAM,—I felt awfully sorry that we did not meet at dancing-school or at the rink before you left New York; but what fun Miss Spud and I have had reading that piece in the Troy paper about your man Spot in the skating-rink, and we were both pleased to learn that you were so heartily received by the Troy skaters. You must have shown them a few new figures, perhaps the same ones you and I used to indulge in. But what fun it must have been when Spot went to grief after his triumph with the white girl who fondly believed that he was masquerading. How we have laughed over the affair! I trust you will do well on your trip and have lots of fun, which I know you so much enjoy. Respectfully,

"ANNIE JUB."

It was a sweet little letter, and well worthy of the perfume it bore. But Sam was just a little disappointed because there was no hint or intimation in it that she would be pleased to hear from him in return, although, of course, it would be no breach of etiquette to write, simply informing her that he had received her letter, and thanking her for it, and after reading it over the third time he resolved to do so, and was then ready for business.

Yes, now to business. Business in bright and beautiful Syracuse, with its broad, clean streets, its elegant houses and stores, its lively general appearance, making it one of the most beautiful inland cities in the world.

Named after one of the most famous cities of the olden time, it is one of the most lively, go-ahead and prosperous of our modern ones.

Spot came to the front after breakfast with the servants, or in the servants' hall, where he had created quite a sensation on account of himself, looking remarkably well.

The bath had been a trifle too much for him, because such things were new to him—in fact, unknown; but the new sensation appeared to please him, and he bobbed up serenely with the grips.

"How are you feeling this morning, Spot?"

"Feel zo I had been bilin', Sam," said he, with a grin all over his mug.

"That's all right. Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Got all de fancy samples?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"Well, let her go," said Sam, and he led the way from the hotel, followed by Spot.

The first merchant he struck on Seneca street had evidently overslept himself that morning, or had been fired out by a domestic explosion of some sort before he had time to get his breakfast.

At all events, Sam couldn't work him for a cent's worth. He wouldn't have bought goods if he could have got them for ten cents on a dollar. He was kicking that morning, and probably would have kicked both Sam and Spot out of his store had Sam been a smaller fellow and less snave. But, as it was, he politely informed him that he would see him later, and started for the next customer.

With this one he had better luck, and without the expenditure of much time he succeeded in selling him quite a large bill of goods. Spot putting in some of his finest work as a dummy in the showing off of the goods.

And before lunch-time he had caught onto two other merchants, from whom, in spite of their protests against buying anything, he managed to obtain some very good orders, after which they went to a saloon for grub and rest.

They sat at the same table and the proprietor didn't appear to like it. The idea of a coon and a white man sitting down to the same table in his saloon was a trifle too much for him, but he hardly knew what to say, since Sam did not object.

"Friend of yours?" he ventured to ask.

"Friend! Well, I should say so. Brother of the King of Abyssinia, traveling with me to learn something about the country. I should say he was my friend. I'm always a friend of the princes of the blood, and don't you forget it. Also, don't forget to bring me some of the nicest roast beef you have (no horn pieces, you know), sweet corn, tomatoes, mashed potatoes, asparagus, string beans, and duplicate the order for the prince; then we will see how you strike us on dessert," Sam rattled off, perfectly paralyzing the astonished proprietor, who took the order without further talk.

He went away to fill it, while Spot sat with open eyes and mouth, gazing with wondering admiration upon the cheeky youth before him, who calmly took out his memorandum book and began to write in it.

"I'm a brudder ob de King of Abbysinia, am I?" he finally asked, while waiting for his grub.

"That's nothing. The king is a fool; but you don't mind a little thing like that, do you, so long as it is all in the family?"

Spot was lost in wondering admiration, but before he had a chance to express himself further, the waiter brought on the grub, which had really a greater attraction for him than royalty had.

It was a good dinner, and after finishing it, Sam got up to pay the bill to the astonished proprietor.

wholesaler, provided they are new and good. Now, it strikes me that you might improve your stock, so far as attractiveness is concerned, by adding a few novelties to your gent's furnishing goods."

"Young man, who is running this business—you or I?" demanded Mr. Budger.

"You, of course, and I am trying to assist you."

"I want none of your assistance."

"Well, for instance, have you any of our patent sock-holders? No? I thought as much. Just being introduced in New York, and are becoming quite the rage. Greatest thing ever introduced. What the side-strap for a stocking-holder is to the ladies, the sock-holder is to gentlemen. Spot, adjust the sock-holder," he added.

sign in your hands, and stand outside of the old man's door, just where he can't see you, and just show that wooden Indian out there how to draw custom, for I must not lose that bet, Spot," he added earnestly. "See?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes! Want me to be wooden Indian?" "No, but a live, colored gentleman, to show off those sock-suspenders and draw trade for an hour or two."

"All right," replied Spot, for Sam's requests was law to him, and he at once prepared for business.

Sam took him out and stood him up not far from the wooden Indian, near to the store where trade for the sock-suspender was to be sold.

"Now, Spot, it all depends on you. Don't let me



"What is it?" asked some. "Why, it's wood, like that Injun over there," said others. "Bet it's alive!" "Try it." and one young fellow did so by sticking a pin into Spot's leg, which caused him to jump, which of course created a loud laugh. "I kick de supper outen youse after I get through wid dis yer job," growled Spot, glaring at him.

"Fact?" he asked.

"Eh?"

"Fact?" and he nodded to Spot.

"Fact;" and bowing politely he started to go, followed by Spot with the gripsacks.

"Well, that skims the blue-bottle fly out of the pan of milk," said the man, gazing after them. "A New York drummer with a king's brother for an attendant! My, oh, my, what a great country this is getting to be. Wonder if I couldn't find a foreign duke or something of the kind for a waiter, and a countess to wrestle with?"

Sam's next visit was to a crabbed old fellow who kept a dry goods and notion store on Maine street.

Sam was feeling first-rate after his feed, but the old merchant was not, business having been very bad for the past few days.

Sam announced himself and his wares, but the old man only growled. He had more goods on hand already than there was sale for, and the idea of buying any more was not to be entertained.

"No, you needn't bother about showing me any more goods of any description. I don't want a thing you have got," said he, doggedly.

"Ah, my dear Mr. Budger, don't lay that fluttering unction to your heart," replied Sam, blandly.

"Lay what?" exclaimed the merchant, while Spot rolled his eyes and murmured: "Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"My dear sir, we are none of us sure of what we do or do not want. Allow me to glance lightly over your exposed stock."

"Glance as much as you like, but you cannot sell me anything—remember that," said he.

"Excuse me, Mr. Budger; my long experience in the business of buying and selling warrants me in asserting that every retailer wants new goods from the

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" and before the merchant could interpose any objections Spot had pulled up his trousers and adjusted the elastic sock-holder.

"There, my dear sir, is one of the neatest, most efficient, and cheapest articles of male attire. Let me sell you a few gross of them?"

"No, sir. Those new-fangled notions may take in New York, but I could never sell them here."

"Allow me to differ with you, my dear sir. I will bet that they will sell like hot cakes. See, we have a beautiful illustrated show-card for them," he added, producing one.

"No, they won't sell."

"Don't be offended if I offer to bet you ten gross of these articles that you can sell a dozen inside of two hours after you display the sign. If you don't you have them for nothing."

"I will agree to it," said the old merchant, at the same time thinking that he would make a good thing out of it, even if nothing more than taking the conceit out of that young drummer.

"Remember, if you don't sell at least a dozen in the first two hours after putting up this card I am to give you ten gross. If you do, you are to order ten gross of me. Correct?"

"Correct."

"Here are two dozen pairs to start on," said Sam, at the same time telling him to put up the card.

Then he and Spot withdrew, but only to the cigar-store next door, in front of which stood the regulation wooden Indian, and which had given Sam an idea.

Buying a cigar, more for an excuse than for anything else, he turned to Spot on business.

"Have you got on a pair of those holders?"

"Oh, yes. Why?"

"Business. Pull up your pantaloons, take this

see a smile on your black mug while you are standing here. Look as sober as the other sign there, and point to the store if anybody speaks to you."

"All right, but don't keep me long, Sam."

"Well, that depends upon how much trade you draw, for you know what the agreement is. Ready, now?"

Even by that time quite a collection of people had stopped to look at the curious spectacle, and Sam slid into the cigar store to watch proceedings.

Spot was a good one at almost anything, and in this he had no notion of being beaten by a wooden Indian, and so he struck an effective attitude, throwing forward his big foot and leg to show off the sock supporter, and conspicuously displaying the card pertaining to it.

"Jud & Spud's Great Patent Sock Supporter"

was what soon drew a crowd around Spot, and the article was so simple and practical that men began to look around, and finally seeing another sign in the store window, they went in and bought them, much to the old tradesman's surprise.

But while some bought, others gathered around to laugh and chaff the patient and faithful Spot, although he was attending strictly to business.

"What is it?" asked some.

"Why, it's wood, like that Injun over there," said others.

"Bet it's alive."

"Try it," and one young fellow did so by sticking a pin into Spot's leg, which caused him to jump, which of course created a loud laugh.

"I kick de supper outen youse after I get through wid dis yer job," growled Spot, glaring at him.

That experimenter lit out, and there was another

laugh; also more jokes. But all the while people were quite intent on examining the article he was showing off, and first one and then another went in to buy, causing the old curmudgeon to wonder what it all meant.

Sam was watching things from the door of the cigar store, and now and then drove away boys who were inclined to have fun with his dummy.

Spot was doing his best, and was doing well, but it was a great strain on his nervous system, and he had already spotted several young fellows with whom he would get hunk when he was through with his work.

But when Sam concluded that the old man had about sold out, he called Spot into the cigar store away from the crowd, and went in to see how things were getting along with Mr. Budger.

"Got any more of those garters?" was his first inquiry.

CHAPTER VI.

"Got any more of them?" exclaimed Sam. "I can order you a million gross."

"Oh, no, not quite so many as that; but I am surprised at the way they sell," said the old merchant, who had "kicked" an hour before.

"Well, didn't I tell you?"

"Yes, but— Well, don't you see, the goods are new, and—"

"That's it exactly. New and useful goods always take. But you lose the bet, and of course stand ready to order ten gross."

"Oh, yes, I guess I can get away with that many," said old Budger, by this time greatly interested in the young drummer and his goods.

"Of course; and allow me to show you some other selling goods," said Sam; but he was continually interrupted by people calling for the patent sock-supporter, for, although Spot had been withdrawn as a dummy, he had been the means of selling many a pair, and they gave such excellent satisfaction that they already began to advertise themselves.

Well, the result was that Sam Spry took a big order from Mr. Budger, after which he rejoined Spot in the cigar store, where he treated him to a fine cigar and bought a box for himself to recompense the proprietor for the trouble he had given him, although, to tell the truth, he had been so highly entertained by Sam's tactics that he did not feel that he owed him anything at all.

And when they emerged from there and proceeded to further business they found a crowd of curious persons ready to follow them.

"Well, Spot, how do you feel?" asked Sam, when they were again on their way.

"I feel just like I would like to jump on de chap as stuck a pin in my leg ter see if I war alive—wheeder I war a wooden injun or not!" growled Spot.

"Oh, that's all right, Spotty, old boy. Such things are always happening in business," said Sam.

"Oh, dey be, hey? Business am business; but do you think ole Abel Jub eber had a somebody stick a pin in him to see if he war alive?" asked Spot.

"Oh, probably not, for he was never on the road as we are. But it's all business, Spot. You know I had catch on and win that bet, and never mind if the crowd did have the laugh on you; never mind if they did stick pins in you to see whether you were a wooden Indian or not; business is business, and the daylight is very full of smoke when I get left, Spot."

"Oh, my—oh, yes! Only why don't you let me go back an' smash some ob dem fellers in de jaw what fool with me?" he asked, appealingly.

"Business before pleasure, Spot," said Sam, laughing in his good-natured way.

"But business am done," said he, indignantly.

"Oh, well, not quite yet, but when it is you may go and wallop the fellow who stuck a pin in you to see if you were alive," said Sam, and he laughed provokingly.

Spot wanted to say something back, but it was not his place to do so, and he knew it, so he followed Sam to the next place on the list.

And here Sam put in some of his fine freecode work with a man who refused to buy a cent's worth, and yet he fell in for quite a respectable order after Sam had "put things" to him in the right light.

And still for all that he had left the worst man in Syracuse for the last.

This man's name was Grimes; but, come to think of it, that is not really his name, but it is pretty near it. At all events, he enjoyed a very unenviable reputation among drummers, being regarded as the very worst crank on the road, and the poor drummer was yet to be found who had ever succeeded in selling him a dollar's worth.

And yet the man did a large business, and was rather popular with his patrons, only drummers being down on him, and that because they could never do business with him.

Sam had learned all about him from other drummers for the house, and he knew that there was a very poor prospect of selling him, even if he did not get fired bodily out for presuming to make the attempt, and yet he resolved to do it.

So, followed by Spot with the "grips" containing the samples, he made for his store, at which there was an unusual rush of customers, and business appeared to be exceedingly brisk.

He knew, of course, that Grimes was not only a hard man to deal with, but also a hard man to get at. And yet he had the nerve to try it.

He had never seen the man, but he remembered him from the descriptions he had received from the other fellows who had "tried him on," and was not a whit surprised at finding him as he had been painted.

"Well, what do you want?" was his first salutation as he confronted Sam and glanced from him to Spot.

"Ah! Mr. Grimes, I have a chance for you to make some money," said Sam, in his smart, smiling way.

"Money! How?"

"Well, you know Mr. Chumpy, your rival?"

"I should say I did. Why?"

"Well (this by the way), I represent Jub & Spud, New York, and I sold him a bill of goods which I am to collect on if I sell you also a bill; but if I do not he gets them for a song—a nothing," said Sam.

"Oh, he does, eh?" asked Grimes.

"Yes; but of course—"

"Of course he will win."

"Win?"

"Yes, without a doubt. Good-day," and he started to leave the young drummer.

"One moment," said Sam.

"Eh?"

"You don't see the point."

"Oh, I don't, eh? Well, where is it?"

"Well, on the outside, he bet me twenty dollars that you wouldn't buy a dollar's worth of me."

"And is the money up?"

"Oh, yes."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" groaned Spot.

"Then he will win it," said Grimes.

"Well, I don't think so," said Sam.

"Why not?"

"Because I don't like a man when he bets on a certainty."

"What do you mean, young man?"

"Well, he told me after he had made the bet that the reason he made it was because he knew you to be the meanest man in Syracuse, and that you are always so far behind the other dealers here that no respectable people will patronize you."

"Did Chumpy say that?" demanded Grimes, by this time well worked up.

"To be sure he did. Didn't he, Spot?"

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" replied Spot, seriously.

"The blooming old rascal! But I—"

"Well, of course we disagreed in that matter, although I had never seen you, and only knew about you through your standing at our house."

"He is an old rascal!" exclaimed Grimes.

"Well, don't ask me to express my opinion publicly of a man who boasts that he bets on a certainty," said Sam, with significant earnestness.

"But, I tell you he is a slanderer."

"I can believe it, Mr. Grimes."

"And I can prove it, sir."

"Not the slightest doubt of it, sir."

"I know it."

"Indeed, your stock here proves it, sir."

"And he is an old scoundrel. Why, he failed here two years ago, and his creditors only got twenty cents on the dollar. Oh, I could tell you enough about that man to turn your stomach! And now, by gracious! he shall not win either one of those bets he made with you. Show me what you've got."

"With pleasure, sir," replied Sam.

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" crowed Spot, as he at once proceeded to expose the samples.

Sam was all business, and in a few minutes he had the indignant old Grimes greatly interested in his goods and their accompanying prices.

Sam had worked him up until he was as mad as a short-tailed bull in fly time, but he was bound not only to get ahead of his slanderer rival, but to make him pay his bet at the same time. So he proceeded to buy a large bill of Sam Spry, and he signed the order boldly, so as to enable Sam to show it to him, and thus win the bet.

"Oh, he said I was a sucker, eh?"

"Well, words to that effect."

"All right. Just go around and show him this order, collect your bet, and then tell him to go off to some secluded spot and die as calmly as he possibly can. Syracuse is no place for him. The situation is too rich for him."

"All right, sir. Much obliged. It will serve him just right, as it would any man who spoke ill of his neighbors."

"But this man is an impostor. Come and see me every time you come from New York."

"Certainly. You will receive your goods day after to-morrow, most likely, and even on the strength of that and the way they will sell, you may depend upon it that I shall see and do more business with you in the future."

And here was another specimen of cheek over matter and prejudice!

Sam and Spot retraced their steps to the hotel, the working-hours of the day being nearly played out; but Spot, as he walked along behind his boss, could not help ruminating.

"Oh, law—oh, philosophy—oh, brains—whar am yer now? Whar am yer 'longside ob cheek?' he mused.

"Dat young man am a born drummer. It am all in him—brains and cheek, the two greatest things in dis yer world, no matter whar a man do, whether he peddles rat poison or bosses a big railroad."

Sam didn't say much to Spot during the remainder of that day, for, as he wanted to get an early train for Rochester the following day, he busied himself with filling out his orders and general instructions to the shipping-department at home regarding the shipping of the goods.

But there was a smile of triumph on his handsome face as he inclosed the order of Mr. Grimes, the man who had downed them all; who was rated first-class so far as credit was concerned, but who had never before been conquered by a drummer; and he thought how solid it would make him with the house of Jub & Spud, and also his fellow-clerks.

Early the next morning they started for Rochester, bright and full of hope, although on this occasion the conductor separated the sheep from the goats, by putting Spot in the second-class car, this being a toney train.

But it didn't please the drummer's "sifer" a peanut's worth, and he would have kicked liked a brindle steer if Sam had not quieted and assured him that it was the proper caper. And so he took his gripsacks into the off-color car.

He looked ugly, but comical all the same, and naturally enough attracted considerable attention from the mixed company congregated there, one of whom was a tramp, who in some way or other had fastened to money enough to buy a ride instead of walking the railroad track, and naturally enough was feeling very fine.

Spot took a seat in front of him and filled up the remainder of it with the grips, and that frolicsome tramp at once made up his unoccupied mind to have some fun with the fancy rig.

So, after the train had started, he tapped him on the shoulder gently, and Spot turned around.

And this tramp was a wag in his way, and he didn't look very much like a "sheeny" either, yet he was an actor and worked his little racket this way.

"Ah, mine friend, I see py dose 'grips' dot you vas no der road," said he.

"Yes," said Spot, but not with much enthusiasm.

"Allow me to press your flesh," he said, extending his hand to Spot smilingly.

"What fo?" demanded Spot, looking at him in surprise.

"What house?"

"Jub & Spud, New York," replied Spot, proudly.

"Ah, know 'em first rate. I'm on it myself," he added, with a wink.

"Dat so?" asked Spot.

"Cert! Reach & Snatchem, Church street."

"Oh," said Spot, looking wise, although he had never heard of the house before.

"But you don't seem to know me," said the gayer tramp, earnestly.

"Well, can't say dat I do."

"Curtis?"

"Who?"

"Curtis, the great one."

"Don't know you."

"Sam'l o' Posen?"

"What?" exclaimed Spot.

"That's me. But don't give it away."

"You Sam'l o' Posen?" asked Spot.

"Yea. But that's all right. I drop the shop when I'm on the road—keep mum. But it's a great snap, this life on the road, eh?"

"I should say so!" replied Spot, and yet he wasn't wholly satisfied that this bum-looking fellow was the great drummer of whom he had heard so much on the stage.

"Heard of me, haven't you?"

"Sam'l o' Posen?"

"Yea, guess you must have."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"Thought so. Shake!" and he reached over for Spot's right fin.

Spot gave it, and they shook.

"Whar you craps?" Spot ventured to ask.

"In the baggage-car. Never carry them with me. It isn't good form. Whar yer got in yours?" he added.

"Fine lot ob goods," said Spot, proudly.

"Lemme see."

Spot unstrapped the grips and gave him a look at the samples, for he was not only proud to meet a fellow drummer, but to meet such a distinguished one as Sam'l o' Posen broke him all up.

So he opened his sample cases and showed the distinguished drummer the different styles of goods they were traveling with.

"Good enough!" said the tramp, and while admiring and examining them he managed to surround two or three suits of fine underwear and several smaller articles which he very much stood in need of.

Then he began a ghost story in explanation of his rough-looking appearance, assuring Spot that he was obliged to adopt a disguise in order to travel without annoyance on account of his popularity.

Finally, the next station to Rochester, he said he would go into the baggage-car and get his traps ready to land at Rochester.

"And I shall be pleased to meet Sam Spry, for I have often heard of him. I will see you in the depot, and then we can become acquainted with each other. Ta, ta," and he went from the car, back toward the baggage-van, leaving Spot in a sort of a daze, and with an infinite idea of how glad Sam would be to meet the renowned drummer.

He strapped up the gripsacks again, and while doing so the train pulled into the depot at Rochester for a rest, and the usual rush was made by those in quest of grub, and those who had landed there to stay, more or less.

Sam Spry was on hand, and Spot was not long in finding him, for he wanted to tell him all about Sam'l o' Posen, and he did.

"What are you giving me?" demanded Sam.

"Why, you is heah ob him?"

"Certainly. I have heard of Curtis, who plays such a character. Why?"

"He war in de car heah jns' now—he's somewhere 'bout de depot," he added, looking anxiously around among the passengers who were rushing hither and yon.

"Who?"

"Why, dat same Sam'l o' Posen."

"Oh, what are you fying for? Get down and walk!" said Sam, walking away.

"Fact. I showed him de samples."

"You did? Spot, you are getting very mellow under your hat, and if you don't look out you'll have softening of the brain. Let's look into those sample grips," he added, severely.

They stopped by a baggage truck, and wondering-ly Spot opened the sample cases.

At a glance Sam saw what he had at first suspected, that some sharper had been interviewing Spot, and had gotten away with about twenty dollars worth of first-class underwear.

"How thick is your skull, anyway? Spot, I am astonished at you. The idea of a New York coon like you being taken in by a country tramp."

"He said he was Sam'l o' Posen, de drummer," whined Spot, strapping up the grips again.

"And if he had said that he was Dr. Landis, you would have believed it of course. Get up with those grips, and then go and hang yourself," he added.

"Want it out?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"What style will you have it pulled in?"

"How?" asked Spot, nervously.

"Have chloroform, electricity, glycerine, magnetic monkey-wrench, explosion, Creedmoor, or plain jerk?" replied the student, looking honest and earnest.

"What am de best?" asked Spot, holding his jaw.

"They are all good, sir. This is a first-class place, and we do things in the highest style of art. But if you want it out quickly, and without pain, I would recommend the Creedmoor style."

"Quick?" asked Spot.

"Very."

"No pain?"

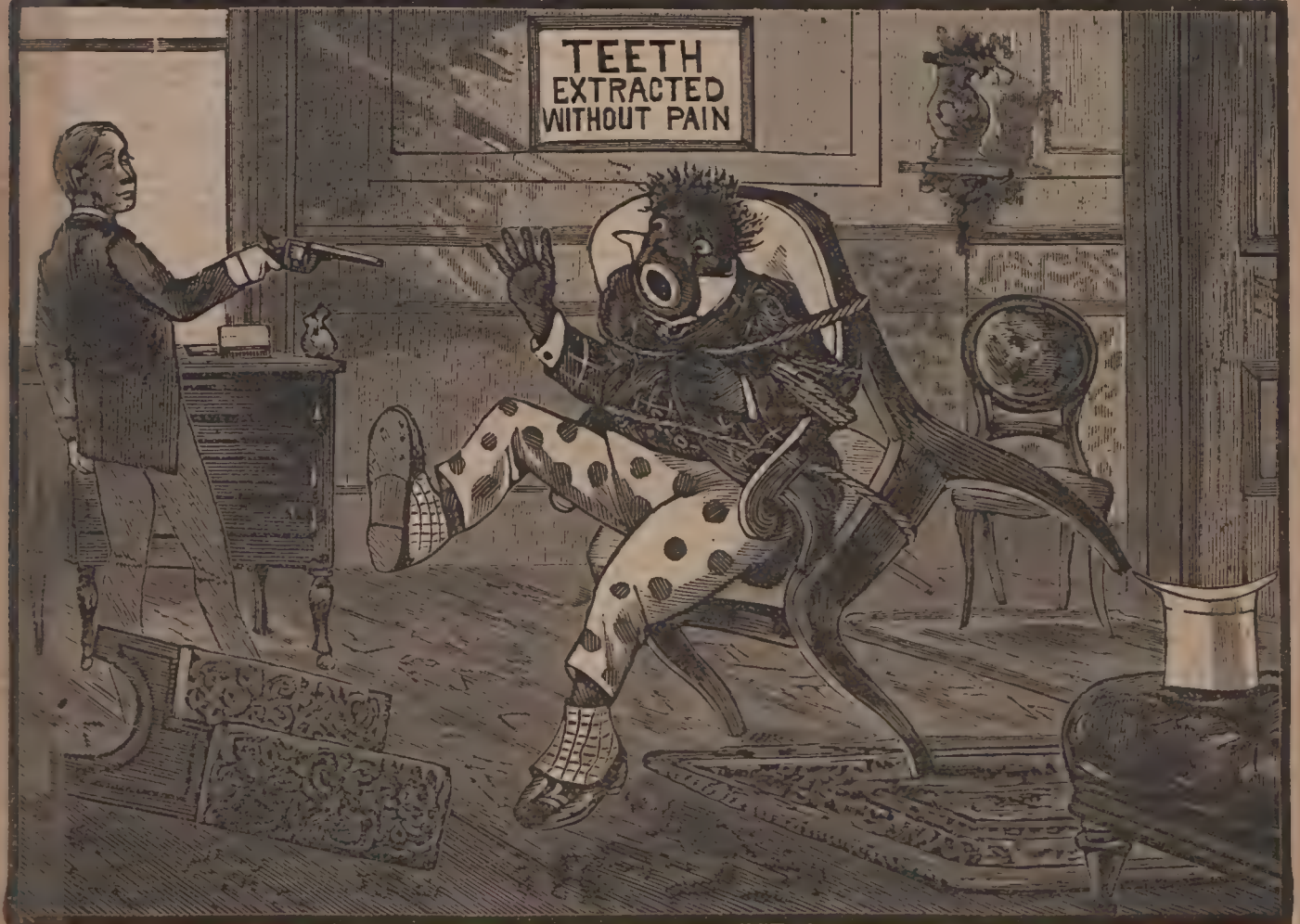
ing-chair on top of him, and sometimes being on top of it himself, but yelling murder all the while.

Just as he reached the sidewalk the boss dentist arrived, and was, naturally enough, astonished to see the Greco-Roman wrestling match that was going on between the unknown negro and his operating-chair, it being hard to tell which was the most broken up.

But just as he reached the locality Spot happened to be on top and was trying to get on his pins, although the struggle was a hard one.

The wondering dentist rushed to his assistance and finally stood him up.

"Oh, wah, wah! Don't shoot!" he cried, in his terror and confusion.



"Wa—wa—" cried Spot, trying to get out of the chair. "Keep quiet, will you!" roared the dentist. "Wa—wa yer gwine ter do?" "Shoot out that aching tooth," and he raised the pistol deliberately.

starting for the hotel, followed by Spot, who never felt so sick and foolish before in his life.

Yes, Spot was sick, but that didn't prevent him from attracting quite as much attention as ever, and being followed by a crowd of laughing boys.

Sam said but little to him during the remainder of that day, which actually made him feel worse than if he had given him a blowing-up on account of his vergency. But he followed him around faithfully, carrying the samples and acting as a dummy whenever occasion demanded.

But the next morning he woke up with a wild tooth ache and a swollen jaw. Indeed, the swelling made him look more comical than ever; in fact, so much so, that Sam refused to take him out; instead of which he went alone to a certain few customers, telling Spot to go to a dentist and have his tooth yanked out and be ready for business the next morning.

It is something unusual for a darky to have the tooth-ache, but Spot had it bad, and when Sam sent him away with his swollen mug tied up in a towel to the tender mercies of a tooth-yanker, he was a sight to behold.

And it is an unusual thing for jaw-rippers to have a colored person for a customer, for as a race their teeth are the best of any in the whole human race.

But Spot, being anxious for relief, jumped at the first dentist's sign he saw, and it chanced to be one of the most fashionable and high-priced manipulators in the city.

The boss had not yet arrived when Spot put in an appearance, and the place was in charge of a student, a sort of a wag in his way, and he instantly made up his mind to have some fun with him.

"Well, what's the matter?" he asked, bluntly.

"Got de tuff-ache," groaned Spot.

"You will never know it."

"Cure de ache?"

"Sure cure. Never feel it again."

"Dat'll suit me. Let her go!"

"Take a seat in the operating-chair," said he, pointing to it in a business-like way.

Spot got into it, and opened his big mouth.

"Never mind about that; I am going to stand on the outside of you to do the job," and then he proceeded to tie him into the chair.

"How 'bout dat?" asked Spot, wonderingly.

"Oh, that's so you won't get nervous," said he, knowing that was just what would make him so.

"Arn't gwine ter hurt me, be you?" he asked.

"Oh, no, or if I do you will never know it. Now, then, which tooth is it?"

"Dis yer big one up heah in de back roof ob my mouf," said he, again opening his bone-yard.

"All right, I see it, and will soon have it out. Just keep your mouth open and close your eyes," said the dental student, stepping back a few paces and taking up a big navy revolver.

"Wa—wa—" cried Spot, trying to get out of the chair.

"Keep quiet, will you?" roared the dentist.

"Wa—wa yer gwine ter do?"

"Shoot out that aching tooth," and he raised the pistol deliberately.

"Ahi! wah! bahl!" yelled Spot, and with one desperate effort he leaped to his feet and started for the door with the dentist's chair on his back.

CHAPTER VII.

RUSHING out of the door of the dentist's shop, he gained the front door, where he tripped and fell, rolling down the front stoop, sometimes with the operat-

"What in thunder is the matter?" asked the dentist.

"Don't shoot!"

"Who is shooting?"

"I—I don't want no toof pulled out by de Creedmoor plan—I arn't got no toofache."

"You haven't? Well, what is the matter with you, anyway?" he demanded.

"I arn't got no toofache. Don't shoot!"

"Where did you get this chair?" asked the dentist, untying the cords which bound him to it.

Spot started, and held up his hand as though to ward off an expected shot, while he looked wildly around.

"What is the matter with you, anyway?"

"Nuffin'. Got no toofache. Lemme go," he answered, at the same time trying to get away.

"Hold on. What have you been doing?"

"Nuffin', sah—nuffin'," he protested.

"But how came you tumbling down these steps in this way, breaking my chair?"

"Brokin' de char! Look at me!" said Spot.

"Who are you?"

"My name an' Spot, an' I am a gemman; a jaffer so' a New York drummer."

"But how came you here in this way?"

"I habe a toofache, an' went in yer ter get it pulled out. De man he ax me how I would habe it pulled, an' say dat de Creedmoor style war de best, an' I tole him to go ahead. So he tie me inter dis yer chair, tole me ter open my mouf, an' den he war gwine ter shoot out de toof wid a pistol, an' I lit out, dat's how 'bout it."

"Oh, that rascal Dick, up to his tricks again," mused the dentist. "You may go," he added, to Spot.

"Well, I should say so! But who am gwine ter fix me up, pay fo' dish yer?"

"Oh, come up-stairs and I will fix you."

"No, you don't, boss; I ain't got no toothache now, an' I's had all de fuss-I wants," and he just limped away from that, leaving the proprietor of that tooth jerkey looking after him with a big grin.

The student Dick came out soon afterward and assisted in carrying the operating-chair back into the office again, after which he told his boss the whole truth regarding the affair, and they both laughed over it for some little time.

But, as it turned out, it was perhaps quite as well as it would have been had the tooth really been pulled out, for the fright given him had entirely done away with the pain; knocked it right out of him, so to speak, as also the swelling, and by the time he reached the hotel he was quite as well as ever he was, although by what means he could not tell.

He didn't know it, but he had been frightened out of his toothache, as many a one has been before. And yet it was a mystery to him, and after thinking the matter over for some time, he gradually came to the conclusion that he didn't have a toothache, after all—that it was only his imagination.

He didn't see Sam Spry again that day until he returned from business, and by this time he had pulled himself together so well that he was looking first rate. But of course he wasn't going to tell Sam the particulars of his morning's adventures. It was enough for him to know that his trouble had all disappeared, and he was all right again. Besides, what a laugh he would have on him!

And the next day Sam put him through a course of sprouts, having a large amount of ground to go over and much work to do.

He didn't find business very good in Rochester, and what few orders he picked up he had to work for with all his nerve.

Spot played a good second fiddle to his fine drumming, and before night he had quite a respectable number of orders.

The next day they were going to Rome, and while Sam was fixing up the Rochester business, and inclosing his orders to the firm of Jub & Spud, Spot concluded to go out and see how the city looked by gaslight.

Being the dandy coon that he was, wandering around alone, he naturally attracted considerable attention, especially among the apprentices and working-boys, who were out in full force that evening.

Some of them took him to be a song and dance man belonging to some show in town, while others gazed at him for a dude coon from New York, who had taken in Rochester for the sake of astonishing it.

Spot saw that he was creating a sensation, and the big swell frills that he put on was a sight to behold. He was, indeed, a swell from Swellville, to look at, and with a big cigar in one corner of his month, cocked up to an angle that nearly touched his hat-rim, he carried a fancy cane, and the peculiar "lift" he gave to first one shoulder and then another as he walked along certainly made him noticeable.

Sam Spry was watching him from the other side of the street, and knew very well how delighted he was at attracting so much attention.

But the boys were not inclined to allow him to go on like a conquering hero, for they gazed and chafed him, and now and then an ancient potatoe or something of the kind would hit him on the back.

This was all the more annoying to Spot just then, for there was a pair of handsome colored girls just in front of him, and as they had shot several admiring glances over their shoulders at him, he felt certain that he had mashed them both.

"Better be careful dar!" said he, stopping and looking back indignantly at the crowd of boys who were pestering him. "Nice place dis yer Rochester am if a gemman can't walk de streets without being consulted," and then he started on again amid a tornado of laughter and jeers.

"Look at the swell dude!"

"See the song and dance man!"

"Say, where be yer goin' ter show?"

"Give us a dance!"

"It's the what-is-it?"

"It's an escaped gorilla!"

"Nigger, nigger, never die."

Big foot and shiny eye!" and a dozen other things were called out to him, while the crowd kept growing larger and larger and more and more demonstrative.

Finally Spot got mad, and did the worst thing he could have done for himself—turned upon one of his tormentors and gave him a cut with his cane.

In an instant he was overwhelmed with a shower of mud, stones, sticks, tomato-cans—indeed, the garbage barrels seemed to be being emptied upon him.

He took refuge in a cigar store, but by this time he was such a looking sight that the proprietor gave him a specimen of "catch-as-catch-can," and bounced him out among his enemies again.

Just then, however, a policeman happened along, and took a hand in the fun by snatching poor Spot and marching him off to the station-house, greatly to the disgust of the small boys, who hadn't had half enough fun with him yet.

Sam Spry followed with the crowd, knowing that he would have to get poor Spot out of the trouble his vanity had gotten him into.

The policeman rushed the unfortunate darky up before his captain.

"What have you caught?" he asked, looking Spot over with a grin.

"I give it up, cap. I found it out here on the street, with a riot following after it, and so I brought it in," replied the officer.

"Who are you?" demanded the captain.

"It's a gentleman," said Spot, savagely.

"Well, you look it!" replied the captain.

"I's been consulted, sah!"

"Indeed! who consulted you?"

"De gang on de street, sah."

"What for?"

"Cause de people up heah don't know a gentleman when they see him."

"Oh, you're a gentleman, are you?"

"Yes, sah."

"How did you get into this song and dance rig?"

"I's in business, sah," said he, proudly.

"Indeed! What sort of business?"

"I's a flier for a drummer."

"What sort of a drummer?"

"All sorts—Jub & Spud, New York. An' I war walkin' out quietly, when I war beset by a mob, sah, an' I don't like it."

"Well, I don't know as I blame you. Is there anybody in Rochester who knows you?"

"Yes, I know him, captain," said Sam Spry, approaching the desk.

"Oh, you do, eh? Who might you be?" asked the captain, looking him over.

"Sam Spry, the New York drummer, the representative of the celebrated house of Jub & Spud, New York. I have been here for two days, and he is my servant and assistant. He dresses loud, like all his race, when there is a chance for it, and I humor it in him because it is business. But that is no reason why he should be assaulted in the public streets when he is behaving himself in a perfectly proper manner, and I protest."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned Spot, looking from Sam to the captain appealingly.

"Well, this sort of a thing is too rich for the inhabitants of Rochester. You will have to tone it down if you keep it here."

"All right. But I am going to take it out of town to-morrow. Poor Spot is not appreciated here," said Sam, with much feeling.

"Oh, my—oh, no!"

The captain asked him several other questions, and they being answered satisfactorily, he then said:

"Take it home, and don't let it go out on the street again unarmed or unattended. It is a wonder that the dogs didn't join in the chase."

"Thanks, captain. Come, Spot. It is a cold, unappreciative world. Let us fly."

"Yes, but I wants to wait 'til my wings grow naturally," replied Spot.

"So you shall, Spot, so you shall. They shall not force wings upon you; you shall not die yet. Come, we will away to our manor house," said Sam, and he said it in such a way that it nearly took the captain's breath away and broke him up.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" sighed Spot, and he at once followed Sam from the station.

"Heard how I lied, didn't you, Spot?" asked Sam, as they walked away.

"How dat, Sam?"

"I told him you were a gentleman."

"Well?"

"Well, there is where the lie came in. Now, you ought to know that anybody who goes out on the street and makes such a guy of himself as you did to-night cannot be a gentleman."

"But they flew mud at me," he protested.

"Well, why shouldn't they? You had no business to go out with your business rig on, and put on a load of Bowery lugs on top of it. Now don't you let me catch you out in this rig again unless you are out with me on business. There is one great trouble with you, Spot," he added.

"Only one? How am dat, Sam?"

"You are too antecedent."

"What?" exclaimed Spot.

"Too previous, in short, too old-time. Now pull yourself together, and hereafter attend strictly to business. Business before pleasure is too rich for your blood. What you want is strictly business until we get back to New York. Then I will tell the boss to knock your shoes off and let you go out to grass for a week or two."

Spot made no reply. In fact, he didn't know what to say. Sam had called him a great many names since he knew him, but he had never called him such a one as "Antecedent," and it made him feel bad—hurt, so to speak.

Well, the next day they started for Rome. Sam had worked Rochester for all it was worth, and Spot had seen enough of it, anyhow. He didn't like the people of Rochester. They failed to appreciate him. Either he was too much for Rochester, or Rochester was not enough for him. Probably the former.

There were several stains on his nobby garments, and an ugly lump over his west eye that he had left to remember the city by, but otherwise he had pulled himself together, and was looking very well.

Rome is one of the brightest inland cities in the United States, if not in the world, and Sam made for it, resolved that while in Rome he would do as the Romans do—make money, for it is an enterprising manufacturing city, and money is what that are all after, as it is most natural they should be.

But Sam's first attempt was hardly what might be called a success. The dealer he called on kept a sort of haberdasher store, and had just put in a stock of goods, although when Sam showed him his goods, and told him the prices, he at once saw that he had been cheated by a former drummer, and had paid at least six per cent. more than he should have done, and he was mad.

Mad, because he knew that if his rivals got hold of Sam's goods, they could not only undersell him, but give customers a superior article, which would, in a very short time, become known and ruin his trade.

And so he turned on Sam and abused him without

stint, a thing he was used to by this time, provided it wasn't rubbed in too hard.

"I believe you are a fraud, sir. I don't believe that the house you pretend to represent can afford to sell such goods at such prices," said he.

"Well, sir, that is because you are not posted, Mr. Slusher. But I will bet you twenty-five dollars to ten that I am no fraud, and that the house of Jub & Spud stands as well as any in New York, and that I represent them and their prices," said Sam, beginning to warm up.

Now the probability is that Slusher did not believe what he had said to Sam, but seeing how the other dealer had cheated him, he was mad at the prospect of his rivals getting better goods at less prices, and so Sam's offer to bet had only made him wilder still.

"Get out of here, you and your coon."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" muttered Spot, hastily packing the goods into the gripsacks.

"I'll bet you are a skin anyway," he added.

"And I'll bet you are a dufer, and leave it to any of your neighbors, especially those in the same line of business," said Sam.

"Get out!"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned Spot, as he hastily seized the grips and made for the door.

"Yes, I shall go, of course, for I don't want to do business with a man like you. But I wouldn't attempt to hurry me if I were in your place," said Sam, in a tantalizing way, as he calmly looked him over.

Mr. Slusher started toward him in an angry mode, but when he saw the calmness of the well-built young man, he weakened in his bluff and went behind his counter.

Spot had set down the grips outside, and was standing in the attitude of a base-ball player on base, ready to catch Sam, expecting to see him fired out of the store, but he wasn't.

"Good-day, Slusher. I'll make you sick before I leave Rome, very sick, for you will have to be made very sick in order to learn decency," said Sam, walking leisurely from the store.

Spot was amazed at his coolness.

"Come on," was all he said to him, starting off.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" said he followed with the grips. And Sam Spry was as good as his word, for he went around among the other dealers and sold them big bills at even lower figures than he had named to Slusher, at the same time telling them how the sour old skin had been taken in by another drummer, and the stock of goods he had on hand were doomed to molder upon his shelves. But when that other drummer called on him afterward, there was flung out of his store upon the sidewalk a badly broken up Sam's 'o Posen.

A short horse is soon curried, and Sam got through with Rome in one day.

"Rome was not built in a day," but it has frequently been "done" in a day.

But they were not to start for Buffalo until the next day, and so it was only natural that they should take that evening to see more of the city than business had allowed them to do, Sam still sticking to his motto—"Business before pleasure."

So he took his time and his way, while Spot took his, the object being to see how the city looked under the gaslight.

And Spot had forgotten his night adventure in Syracuse, and was feeling as fine as black silk, ready for another.

Sam Spry was a very quiet sort of a fellow, and if he had any fun, it was on the "strict Q. T.," for Sam was sensible.

He took the town in for quite a while, and then concluded he would go to the theater, as there was a "New York Combination" playing there, and doing big advertising.

Funny, but Spot hit upon the same idea, although he had rather have seen a minstrel show.

But Spot was always in luck, one way or the other. "One way or the other" comprehends the whole thing.

The manager of that show encountered Spot. He wanted a comical negro for one scene, and he didn't know of anybody who could make up to look half so comical as this original darky was.

He stopped Spot and explained the situation.

"Got nobody to go on in the first scene. Man that does it is sick. There's nothing to say, and if you'll go on, I'll give you a dollar and ten tickets for to-morrow night," said he.

Spot was only human, and besides that, he was always only too happy to get a chance to show himself in public, especially in connection with almost any sort of a show, so he agreed.

The manager then took him around behind the scenes and explained to him what he would have to do. The play was called "The Drunkard's Warning; or, Snakes in his Boots," and all Spot was to do was to act as a silent watchman over the hero, who was in an hospital ward, suffering with a bad attack of jim-jams.

But the manager explained to him that he would not have to say or do anything—simply to be present during the scene.

This suited Spot pretty well, although he would have liked it better had it been a speaking part, for he did want to show off bad, and besides that, he belonged to an amateur dramatic association in New York.

So he braced up and was ready for the scene.

Meanwhile, the house was slowly filling up, and Sam Spry was in one of the boxes.

It was the first scene in the drama, and the stage-manager showed Spot his business, which consisted simply in walking up and down before the cell door, while the hero was having his jim-jams.

The first curtain bell rung, and the actor with the

"Jims" took his place in a mess of straw upon the stage.

He had an excellent make-up, and looked the part of a person troubled with James Jams to perfection, so much so that Spot felt a trifle nervous, although he knew, of course, that there was no real danger in him.

The fellow went on with a sensational speech, given in short snaps, and Spot actually became very much interested in him, so much so that he was unconsciously doing good acting himself.

"Ha!" exclaimed the maniac, suddenly seeing his keeper, and the expression so startled Spot that he jumped back and created a laugh.

In "The Drunkard's Warning" had drank so much that he was playing his part with altogether too much realism.

The manager came out and apologized, stating that the excitement was altogether unwarranted, but that it was all owing to a green man whom he had been obliged to put into the part at only a few moments' notice, and never having seen the drama, he became unnecessarily frightened and caused all the trouble.

This created something of a laugh, and in a measure restored good feeling again, but in the meantime another actor had dressed for the part, and the play went on, omitting the first scene, and gave very good

"No. Why?"
"Well, I didn't know but what you had been, and that they had run you through a threshing-machine," replied Sam, laughing.

"Oh, no! But it's jus' my luck!" he sighed.

"What is?"

"I's allus gettin' inter trouble on somebody else's account, jus' 'caus I's ready to do an' dare."

"I dare say. But what is it now, Spot?"

"Stopped a runaway," said he, giving his shoulders a regular French shrug.

"You don't tell me!"

"Fact, Sam. Only happened a few moments ago. Mule run away wid a beautiful girl in a coach. Come



"Better be careful dar!" said he, stopping and looking back indignantly at the crowd of boys who were pestering him. "Nice place dis yer Rochester am if a gemman can't walk de streets without being consulted."

Sam Spry had already recognized him.

The maniac crept toward the sooty keeper in a way that thrilled the audience, but Spot knew it was only acting, for he was an actor himself.

Suddenly the maniac jumped upon him, seizing him by the throat, although not tightly enough to prevent him from wildly shouting murder.

He slammed him down upon his back. He dragged him furiously around and wiped up the stage with him, and before the curtain could be rung down or an effort made for his rescue, he dragged him down to the foot-lights and threw him headlong at the man who was playing the bull fiddle in the orchestra.

CHAPTER VIII.

The scene that poor Spot had enacted at the theater in Rome was decidedly a sensational one, especially to himself.

The curtain was rung down while he was picking himself out of the ruined bull-fiddle, when it was found that the actor who was playing the part of a drunkard with the delirium tremens was actually suffering from them.

But Spot never stopped to hear any of the particulars of the case, not even the abjurations of the Dutchman who owned the fiddle, but he got out of that in the best time he could make, frightening the audience as he rushed madly up the center aisle, and creating the wildest excitement.

A policeman collared him as he was going out of the door, and demanded to know what the trouble was.

"Luff me go—luff me go!" he cried, wildly.

"Go back and play your part."

"No, sah; no mo' lunatic keeper fo' me," and, breaking away, he ran for home like mad.

But there really was trouble behind the scenes, for the actor who was playing the part of the drunkard

satisfaction, while the too realistic actor was taken to the hospital.

But Sam Spry was puzzled how to account for his servant being on the stage at all. How the mischief came he there, anyway? And was the whole business of it a gag?

So after the performance was over he waited upon the manager for an explanation, and it was given to him as the reader understands it.

Sam nearly tore his buttons off laughing over the matter, and on his return to the hotel he found Spot seated dejectedly on a chair, looking like the last pansy of summer.

Nor had he escaped from his terrible theatrical experience unscathed, for his snout was swollen to about twice its natural size.

On account of his getting it into one of the left holes of the bull fiddle.

And his intellectual bumps were considerably swollen, and too large for the hat he wore.

On account of his poking his head through the wooden belly of that same bull fiddle.

And his neck wanted to be put in a cot.

On account of its being in the way when the Dutch owner of that same bull fiddle struck out.

And there was a look of weariness overspreading his swollen and disfigured mug.

On account of the way he had been handled, both by that insane actor and the different members of the orchestra, more especially the indignant owner of that aforesaid bull fiddle.

"What's the matter with you, Spot?" asked Sam, as he entered the room where he sat.

"Me!" he exclaimed, like a man who had suddenly been awakened from a reverie.

"Yes. You look all broken up and crushed."

"Do I?"

"Yes; I should murmur that you did. Have you been out in the country among the farmers?"

right past de hotel heah, an' she war a-screamin' fo' help an' some one ter save her fo' her poo' mudder's sake, who war worth a million. Well, you know how I is. I rushed out, seized dat corvortin' mule by his east ear wid one hand, and catch hold ob de bridle by de odder. He drag me free blocks befo' I flung him—dung him right down on de ground. Seel An' de young lady war rescued. Den dat mule he got up an' turn on me, an' dat's what's de matter," said he, settling into his seat.

"Come off!" said Sam, after looking at him a moment.

"What fo'?" Spot asked, mildly.

"Chestnut!"

"How dat?" he asked, opening his eyes.

"That's the very same ghost story that you gave me in Albany," said Sam, laughing.

"Ah—" and Spot's jaw dropped and his big mouth opened.

"The very same. Why don't you get something new?"

"Wal, it am a fao'. It happen right heah jus' de same," he persisted.

"Climb down!"

"Wha' fo'?"

"I know what happened you."

"How dat?"

"I was at the theater this evening."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" sighed Spot.

"Yes, and I saw your act."

If Spot had been white he would have blushed crimson.

"Y—yes, but dat—dat war befo'," said he, putting forth all the gall he had.

"Come off! Don't attempt to give me any of your ghost stories, for I know all about it. You did a great act, Spot, a great act. Why don't you take to the stage and leave drumming alone?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" Spot said, softly.

"I think I have heard you say that you belonged to the colored men's 'Ira Aldrich dramatic club,' haven't I?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes."

"Well, the members will be proud to hear of your great hit this evening."

"Hit?" exclaimed Spot.

"Yes, when you hit that bull-fiddle with your head and broke it all to pieces. Spot, you are altogether too transcendently recent."

"What?" exclaimed Spot, opening his eyes.

"Too fundamentally vegetable."

"What dat you say?" and Spot began to get mad now, for he thought he was being insulted.

"Too recently fructified, Spot."

"Don't gib me no Latin, Sam, but tell me what you mean," said he, earnestly.

"Well, then, to get down to your level, you are too confounded new and green."

Spot rolled his big eyes without speaking.

"I am ashamed of you, Spot, for everything that comes along you jump into. If there is a bait thrown out for a sucker, you are the first one to go for it. Something has happened you in every place we have been in, and when we get to Buffalo, and there happens to be a balloon ascension, I wouldn't be a bit surprised to see you volunteer to go in for ballast, to be thrown out whenever the balloon is wanted to go higher."

Spot was silent.

"Put your hands down, and don't try to catch on to everything that comes along."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" he sighed.

"Now go to bed and be ready for an early start in the morning, and do try and see if you can't get up to your room without having anything happen to you."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" and he started in a humble and most dejected manner.

But he was honest, as he was in nearly everything he undertook to do, and generally quite as unfortunate as he was honest. However, all he had to do now was to go quietly to bed and think over the sensational events of the day and evening until he fell asleep.

And there was no reason why he should not succeed in doing so simple a thing as that. Well, only one reason at all events.

But who would have dreamed of it?

At the foot of the second flight of stairs he encountered the cook, a big, red-fisted, red-faced daughter of Erin, and Spot, being always the pink of politeness to the opposite sex, lifted his hat gallantly and stood aside for her to pass, although he did not speak or even look at her rudely.

"Get out, ye monkey!" cried the cook, as she stopped, and started back.

Spot simply bowed, but said nothing.

"Who are yees bowin' ter, yer nagger? Be out av this, or, begorra, I'll soon make yees sick, so I will," and she advanced toward him with clenched fists.

"I-I begs pardon, miss, I—"

He didn't have a chance to proceed further, either with apologies or explanations, for the next thing he knew a mule kicked him, as he thought, and he was going rattle-te-bump down stairs like a quarter of dressed beef.

The noise brought everybody out, Sam included, to see how much of the house had fallen down, and while Spot was trying to pull himself together and the others were seeking an explanation, the voice of that belligerent cook was heard at the head of the stairs.

"Bad manners ter yees, do yer think yer'll be afther tryin' ter mash a dacent Irish gurl again? Whoop!" and she continued her way to her quarters with triumphant chuckles.

Those few words told her side of the story, and they all understood it. They all laughed but Spot.

"Been too fresh again, eh?" said Sam. "What was I tellin' you?"

"I—I didn't do nuffin' in de world," he whined.

"Oh, certainly not. You never do. Any bones broken?"

"Oh, my, I's all broken up, Sam," he groaned.

"Well, now, see if you can get to bed without havin' anything else happen to you."

"Oh, my—oh, yes! But I's gwine ter go back to New York to-morrow. What you want is an India-rubber man to travel wiv you, Sam."

"Oh, you'll get toughened, if you don't get killed first. Now, go to bed," said Sam, and while the unfortunate darky limped slowly and sadly up stairs, Sam entertained the landlord and his friends by relating some of Spot's adventures and mishaps since leaving New York.

The next day they made a jump for Buffalo, where Sam hoped to do a good business, having become satisfied that the smaller intermediate towns had been worked by other drummers in the same line too recently, and although Spot was indeed pretty badly broken up, he managed to pull himself together, so that by the time they were ready for business he was something like himself again.

Buffalo is a large city, and a lively one, and there was a good week's work to be done there.

Sam had a large list of dealers made out, and at once proceeded to business, having first telegraphed his arrival to Jub & Spud, inquiring if they had any instructions for him, and received this answer: "No. Go ahead," and he started.

He found trade good there, and he therefore took a large number of orders, some of which were quite large ones.

And there being always a plenty of amusements in the city, both Sam and Spot found no difficulty in getting all the entertainment they wanted after the day's work was done.

Spot had not been four days in the city before he was just as fancy a coon as ever he was in New York.

He had circulated much in the locality inhabited by colored people, where he had become a great beau and masher among the sable belles.

But thus far he had escaped trouble, and Sam began to think that he had really learned something from his previous adventures.

He was always ready for business, and took great pride in the position he occupied and the notice he awakened wherever he went. But after business ("Business before pleasure") he might have been seen on some of the parks, or the broad street promenades arm in arm with some of Buffalo's fairest (cream colored) daughters—the "Dandy Jim" of Buffalo.

This was all very well, but it was liable to make trouble. He was encroaching and catching the girls belonging to other darkys, and he, being a stranger, it is no wonder that he aroused animosity.

But still he bobbed up serenely for business every morning, and Sam never thought of questioning him as to what he was doing when off duty.

But one evening Sam, feeling too tired to go to the theater, and more like going off somewhere by himself where he could enjoy a good cigar, took a stroll out upon one of the parks, and sat down apart from the throng to think, for he had that day received a dainty letter with some rose leaves in it, and he wanted to sit down and recall the words of the bright, gossipy, perfumed epistle, and that was what took him to a secluded seat in the park.

He had not been seated many minutes, however, when a pair—male and female—took possession of a seat next to where he sat, although in the dim light, of course, he could not see them in a closer degree than just plainly enough to know that it was a couple, probably lovers, which somehow interested him.

Five minutes later he knew that the male portion of the couple was his "dfer," Spot, recognizing him by his voice.

And he was not much longer in finding out that Spot was on his high horse, and was making the most poetic sort of love to his companion.

"Oh, you's foolin'," he heard his companion say.

"Foolin'!" exclaimed Spot, in a hurt tone of voice.

"Yes; you'll forget me when you go away."

"Forget you, honey? Forget you? Oh, Pauline, listen to de words ob my heart. Does de green earth eber forget de bright moon, dat monthly, like a fairy boat, skims de clear ocean ob blue overhead? Ah, no, Pauline, she neber forgets dat moon—no mo' den I can forget yous. Sw'ar dat you will lub an' be true to me though de heavens should fall," he added, in passionate tones.

Sam couldn't hear her reply, and there was a moment or two of silence, broken at first only by a sound like the calling of chickens by somebody.

But there presently came other sounds, and Sam heard a female screech, followed by a "ting," and then there were sounds of somebody scratching gravel with big feet.

"Now, you, Pauline, you hook right enter me, an' come home outen dis yer, an' if I eber coteh you wid dat song-an'-dance coon again, I jus' work my razor on you bof!" was another speech that Sam overheard. And then there was silence.

"Well, I guess Spot has been knocked out again," he mused. "At all events, I guess the poetry has been knocked out of him."

He walked slowly toward the seat where all this had happened, but it was tenantless, and all around was calm and still.

But Sam said nothing, and concluded to await events, that is after he saw the morning after that Spot only had an extra lump in front of his ear which did not incapacitate him from duty.

All unknown to both of them, however, there was a cloud gathering over the mixed skies of masher Spot.

He had made himself not only too numerous among the colored girls of Buffalo, but also and at the same time very obnoxious to their colored beaux, and they set to work to put up a job on him that would knock him plumb out.

It took some time to work it up, but it was all ready on the day that they were to leave Buffalo, it being no less than a warrant for Spot's arrest on a charge of abandonment and bigamy. Think of it!

And this legal instrument was placed in the hands of an officer, together with the name of the witnesses against him.

This done, the officer started out to find the prisoner, and succeeded in arresting him in the vestibule of the hotel during the temporary absence of Sam, who was getting ready for his next start.

"What!" exclaimed Spot.

"Come along!" growled the officer, snatching him by the collar, and without further explanation he rushed him over to the police court-room.

Spot was paralyzed, not having the slightest idea of what he was arrested for, and the moment he entered the room he saw that it was nearly filled with people of his own color.

"Oh, dar am de wretch!" cried one of the women, who had a baby in her arms and two others clinging to her skirts.

"Yes, dar am de villain!" said another, who was situated in like manner.

"Oh, you wretch!" cried another, who had no children on exhibition.

And then they all howled their abjurations together, making the court-room ring like the vestibule of a wake.

The officer hustled him up before the judge, who fastened his eagle eyes upon him.

Spot had his mouth and eyes wide open, all the while wondering what it meant.

"Officer, what have you here?" asked the judge.

"A bad, bad man, judge," replied the officer, impressively, and at the same time kicking Spot's shins.

"Oh, a drefful bad, bad man!" came a chorus of voices from the witnesses.

"What has he done?"

"He married me, judge!"

"An' me. Look at dese chillun, judge."

"An' look at dese yer chillun, judge!" exclaimed a third, holding up a fat baby and offering to show three more of the same stamp.

"And do you all claim that this man has been base enough to marry all of you?" asked the judge, opening his eyes.

"Yes, judge, he done gone and deceive us all."

"Oh, yes, oh, yes!" cried the others.

"Good gracious! Prisoner, what have you to say to all these charges?" asked the judge.

Spot looked altogether dazed, and could make no answer at all. Indeed, he seemed afraid to open his mouth for fear of biting the heart that was in it.

"I—I don't know nuffin' 'bout it, sah," said he, gazing wildly around him.

"What?"

"Oh—oh! heah dat nigger talk!"

"Heah de base deceaber!"

"Oh, you wretch! Look at you chillun!"

"An' dese chillun!" said the other.

"Don't know nuffin' 'bout it, sah," said he again, and there followed another chorus of howls.

"You awful, shameful, bigamistic nigger!"

"Look me in de face!"

"An' den take a look at me!"

"Den look at you chillun!"

"I don't know nuffin' 'bout you nohow."

"Oh—oh—oh! Chillun, amn't dat you farder?" asked one of them, pointing to Spot.

But the "chillun" did not appear to know him from a jack rabbit, and only glared at him stupidly.

Just then Sam Spry put in an appearance. He had heard about Spot's arrest, and hastened to the court for the purpose of learning the particulars.

This he was not long in doing, and then he proceeded to knock the fun all out of the job that had been put up on his man by stating who he was and all about him, after which, the judge questioned the women closer, when they finally admitted that they might possibly be mistaken.

"You can go," said the judge, and Spot at once followed Sam from the court-room, being in turn followed by the crowd of women.

CHAPTER IX.

We next hear of Sam Spry and his servant, Spot, in Ogdensburg, quite a long distance from Buffalo, where we recorded their doings last, but the smaller places which they visited between the two points presented nothing of importance, and so we pass them by—not because they are not places of note, bright and smart, but because everything was going along smoothly, and nothing happened at any of them that warrants notice.

But Spot, during all this time, was on his good behavior, and this accounts in the most part for passing these places by. The fact is, his experiences at Buffalo, together with the severe lectures that Sam had given him, had toned him down to such an extent that he became very humble, also very careful as to what he did. And so Sam came to the conclusion gradually that he had learned sense.

But Spot was too fancy a coon to remain quiet for any length of time. He was like a boy who receives a whipping. He remembers all about what he got it for so long as the smart remains, after which he is liable to rush right in and earn another one.

In the meantime, however, Sam had collared a large number of orders that he had returned to the house of Jub & Spud, which made him remarkably solid with the firm. Indeed, old Jub was half paralyzed at his success, and he knew in his own mind that Sam was a success, and he was ready to acknowledge it to anybody but his daughter Annie.

But Annie was hearing about it all the same, for Mr. Spud often spoke of the young fellow's success in the home circle, and his daughter lost no time in communicating it to her.

Nor was this all, for there was a bit of correspondence between herself and Sam, and although he never talked "shop" in his letters, she nevertheless understood from them that he was meeting with much more success than her father ever mentioned.

And old Jub was still happy in the belief that he had broken up any little tenderness which might have existed, or that might have existed if Sam had not been sent away, and he frequently, when he thought of it, patted the top of his head and called it "big."

But let's return to Ogdensburg, where we left Sam and Spot.

Ogdensburg is one of the handsomest, smartest and most important places on the St. Lawrence river; a city almost equal to Buffalo as a grain and lumber mart, and the calling place for more shipping than any other place on the river.

Naturally enough, Sam calculated on doing a fine stroke of business in so bright a place, and he moved for that sort of a thing without loss of time, although he was not long in finding out that there were several other drummers there besides himself, some of whom had the same line of goods, although they did not have a walking dummy on which they could show off their wares.

And it was this fact that made them jealous of Sam. So two or three of them resolved to go for Spot and make it somewhat lively for him in order to make their chances even with Sam Spry, of whom they had already heard much.

The first day out was a good one for him, while the other fellows got somewhat "left," although they had a fine line of goods, which made Spot feel so good that he could scarcely contain himself, and he fondly believed that he had quite as much to do with it as Sam had.

And that evening, after business, the magnificent Spot went out behind a big cigar for a promenade, that he might show himself, that being a thing he was very fond of doing.

Finally his eye lighted on a handsome colored belle who was slowly walking in the same direction as he was, and she rolled her big, fascinating eyes at him in a most coquettish manner, and yet she was not too forward.

"Dat am a mash fo' shuah," he mused, and then he allowed her to walk ahead for a few yards, that he might get on to her figure and style.

It was grand, beautiful, graceful as a black swan, and he became mashed himself.

sweetness all inferior to you own am kept in a state ob frozen conditions?" he added.

"Jus' right ahead dar," said she, pointing to about a fourth-rate ice-cream saloon.

"Oh, heavenly rendezvous! as we say in New York," and he led the way into it.

It was a great mash. She was even more beautiful when he came to see her under the lights of the saloon, and she cast eyes upon him that made him believe that she surely was in love with him.

So he ordered ice-cream of all flavors and colors, together with lemonade and candy and some fruit, all the while making love to her, complimenting her on

"What for?" asked the officer.

"He's a dynamiter, and I have lured him over from Ogdensburg so as to deliver him up."

"What!" exclaimed the constable, grabbing Spot by the coat collar.

"Dat's what I'd like ter know. What is you giving him, honey?" he asked, turning to her.

"Oh, that's all right. I am a detective. You are an emissary of O'Donovan Rossa, and so I order your arrest," said she, firmly.

"Oh, gracious me, Angella!" said Spot.

"Give me no mo taff, ole man."

"Din I gib you ice-cream little while ago?" he asked, in a hurt tone of voice.



"I don't know nuffin' 'bout you nohow." "Oh—oh—oh! Chillun, amn't dat you farder?" asked one of them, pointing to Spot. But the "chillun" did not appear to know him from a jack rabbit and only glared at him stupidly.

After watching her graceful walk for awhile, he gradually approached her, and she rolled her eye around just as he got near to her.

"I begs pardon, miss, but can you shew me de way to de Prescott Ferry?" he asked, at the same time politely raising his hat.

"Oh, my, yes. I see gwine right dat way myself," she replied, with an ivoryed laugh.

"How fortunate, if you'll but prove as kind as you are beautiful. I's a stranger heah—am a drummer from New York, an' I thought as how dat I would like to do Prescott this ebenin'."

"Oh, certainly. I'll show you wid pleasure. I was a gwine ter stop down heah to de ice-cream saloon; but neber mind it now," said she, at the same time uttering a pretty little laugh, and turning a glance upon him that broke him all up.

"Gracious me, miss, don't let me took you outen ob you way," said he, earnestly.

"Oh, no," she said, with a piece of a sigh.

"Don't gib up de ice-cream saloon. I'll go with you, an' consider it a pleasure to treat you to de best dat de house can produce."

"Yes, but you is a stranger," said she.

"Why, dat's nuffin. Eberybody am strangers 'til dey get 'quainted. I assure you dat I is a gemman ob de fast water, an' I knows how to treat a refined lady to either ice-cream or de best ob politeness. Shall I hab de pleasure?"

"Well, I—"

"My name am Spot, an' I can gib you de very best ob references from de great house of Jub & Spud."

"Dat so?" she asked, archly.

"Yea, fair lady, an' might I be so bold as ter ask what you angelic name might be?"

"Angella," she simpered.

"Oh, I know'd it must be something angelic, an' I feels proud ter know it. Whar am dat saloon whar

her beauty, and spitting out all the big words he had ever heard, without regard to their propriety.

But finally she said she must be going home, and that it was ferry time, yet this did not choke him off at all. Indeed, he offered at once to escort her home, and she accepted him. Indeed, she probably would have blushed could she have done so.

And, oh, it was a dandy sight to see as they marched out of that saloon arm in arm, for now that they were getting better acquainted she felt it to be the proper caper evidently to put on as many airs as her escort did, and the result was that everybody turned around to look at them.

But Spot scarcely minded it. He was so very much taken with the mash he had made that he didn't notice ordinary things. Oh, no!

So they waltzed down toward the ferry, Spot all the while trying to impress the young lady that he was worth a million of dollars, and that he was only drumming for the sake of getting experience and seeing the country.

The river is about two miles wide between Ogdensburg and Prescott, and during the journey Spot had a good chance to get in all his fine work and complete his conquest before they arrived on the Canadian side of the river, and you may bet that he put it in with powdered sugar.

Finally they landed at Prescott, Canada, and started up the main street from the ferry landing.

But she seemed to grow suddenly cold after they had landed, and for fear that the evening air was affecting her, he placed his arm around her waist as they walked along.

"Sweetness, does you feel cold?" he asked.

"Wal, guess I got too much ob dat ice-cream," said she, but not mirthfully.

"How would a little hot drops do, honey?"

Just then she met a constable and hailed him.

"Take this man in," said she.

"Oh, that was because you were mashed. Come off now. Take him in, officer."

"All right, I'll have to do it," said the Prescott official, and he was a "blasted Britisher."

"Oh, dis yer am a joke," said Spot, at the same time trying to smile.

It was a sickly smile, and an unfinished one at that, for just then the constable yanked him.

"Look out for him—he's loaded!" said the artful wench.

"Oh, I'll fix that!" said the officer, and in the twinkling of a lamb's tail he snapped a pair of handcuffs on the wrists of his prisoner.

"Oh, my, oh, what dis yer mean?" moaned Spot now convinced that it was not a joke and being thoroughly frightened.

"I'll soon show you, you bloody blackened dynamiter. Come along!" said the officer.

"I've got to go back and arrest another one of them, and I'll appear before the magistrate in the morning," said the girl, walking away.

"Does, dish yer am a great mistake," said Spot.

"Shut up, or I'll club you!" replied the officer, for he knew he had his prisoner perfectly secure.

And in spite of his protests, poor Spot was taken to the caboose and locked up for the night, after which the officer went to the magistrate and reported that he had arrested an Irish dynamiter, disguised as a colored song and dance man.

This was very pleasing to the guardian of the law and the peace, for he had been in office a year or more and had never seen his name in the papers, because of the peacefulness of the citizens. But now he would probably come to the front, and see his name in the papers to his heart's content in connection with the unmasking of a plot of great and fiendish import.

The officer told him about the artful female detective, who had also resorted to burnt cork in order to work her points better, and how she had returned to

make another arrest, and this promised additional notoriety for the ambitious magistrate, who chuckled at the prospect.

But how about poor Spot?

At first he was inclined to regard it as a joke that his "mash" had played upon him, but that idea speedily wore away. He couldn't understand being called a dynamiter at all. The word was too big for him, even if he had understood its definition, and so he fretted and worried for an hour or two, and finally went to sleep, thinking it would be all right in the morning.

But he knew only a little of the law's delay, especially when it is administered by a donkey.

Morning came, but that magistrate was not yet ready to examine the prisoner, for his accomplice had not been secured, and until then nothing would be done in such an important case.

So the great man contented himself with looking wise and keeping mysteriously silent, or hinting of great revelations soon to be made which might involve the United States and Canada in a long and bloody war, and Spot was not allowed to see or be seen, or to hold the slightest communication with the outside world.

Of course when Sam Spry wanted him in the morning he was not to be found. No one had seen him since the evening before, and Sam became so anxious about him that he went around to the station-houses to see if he had been arrested.

Indeed, he did no business during that day, which was just exactly what his rivals wanted, and they lost no time in securing the orders that Sam would undoubtedly have been sure of had he not given up business to hunt for Spot.

But he could get no trace of him, and finally came to the conclusion that Spot had become tired of that sort of a life and had run away from him.

He telegraphed to New York, asking if he had shown up at the store, and for him to be returned if he had, which of course created considerable surprise and wonderment about the place.

But he could get no clew to his whereabouts, and as a last resort he went down by the river-front, where the majority of the colored people of Ogdensburg lived, hoping to hear something of him, and it was here, indeed, that he got the first faint trace of his missing man.

"Oh, I seen dat fancy coon de other night gwine ober to Prescott with a fancy yaller gal," said an old colored woman, but she could give no further information about the matter.

Sam at once mistrusted that Spot had got into some other scrape, and at once started for the Canadian side of the river in search of him.

His first inquiries were, naturally, of the police; but those valiant guardians of the peace at once suspected Sam of being the companion of the disguised dynamiter, and instead of giving him any information, they roughly arrested him.

They dragged him before the old Dogberry of a magistrate who had just taken his seat on the bench for the purpose of holding a preliminary examination in the case of Spot, who was in the prisoner's pen, the saddest and most woe-begone coon that was ever seen in the world.

"Oh, my—oh, yes! dar be he!" exclaimed he, catching sight of Sam. "Oh, Sam! oh, Mr. Spry! come an' get me outen yer!" he pleaded.

"Silence in the court!" roared an officer.

"Who have you there, officer?" asked the old magistrate, frowning upon Sam.

"I found him inquiring about this suspect, and so arrested him," replied the officer.

"You did right. More than likely he is this fiend's accomplice, and we cannot be too careful in these perilous times. We shall presently see."

"What is the meaning of this outrage?" demanded Sam, addressing the court.

"Shut up, sir! How dare you address the court?" roared the magistrate, getting red in the face.

"I have a right, sir, to know why I am thus arrested, and why my servant is also a prisoner here," replied Sam, warmly.

"No, sir. If you wish to be heard at all, you must employ counsel."

"Be cool enough to show me a counselor," said Sam, turning to the officer.

"There sits one."

"Very well, I engage you to ask for me what I am arrested for," said Sam, to the lawyer.

Then the lawyer rose to question the court in behalf of his client.

"The disguised prisoner was arrested at the instigation of a woman, who charged him with being an emissary of O'Donovan Rossa, with evil designs against her majesty's subjects, and this young man is under arrest for being an accomplice."

"Is the woman in court who moved the arrest?" asked the lawyer.

"No; the government expects her soon, and will then be ready to proceed with the examination."

"But, your honor, I maintain that this whole thing is a mistake, if not an actual outrage. This gentleman is a commercial traveler for the well-known house of Jub & Spud, New York, and that colored boy is his servant."

"He is an Irishman in disguise, sir."

"That can be easily disproved. Let the court-officer go over him with soap and water."

"I'll do nothing of the kind, sir, and if you make another suggestion like that, I will fine you for contempt of court."

"My client has numerous witnesses residing in Ogdensburg to prove what he says to be true."

"Doubtless. There are many dynamiters over there ready to swear to anything to save a fellow-conspirator. But it is my duty to sift this thing to the bottom, and find out all about the prisoners. We are

living in perilous times, and it behooves every loyal Canadian to do his duty. I hold the prisoners for trial."

"Trial when?"

"When the government is ready. I have written to Ottawa for instructions."

"Very well, I will apply for a writ, and have them taken before a higher court, for this one is unjust and irregular," replied the lawyer.

"Silence, sir, or I will commit you for contempt. Lock the prisoners up."

"Oh, my—oh, my!" moaned Spot.

Sam and his lawyer had a few moments' whispered conversation, after which he was locked in a separate cell from Spot, where for the next few hours he was blue and indignant.

Was there ever such an outrage, and what the deuce did it all mean, anyway?

But his lawyer proved himself to be a good one, and in a short time he summonsed some of the leading merchants of Ogdensburg, and obtained a writ of *habeas corpus* which took both Sam and Spot before a higher court, where the merits of the case were at once gone into.

The first thing to do was to prove that Spot was really what he seemed to be, and in order to do that the court officer went over his face with a sponge and some strong soap suds.

In doing this he got some of it into his eyes.

This produced a sensation in court, for the poor fellow closed his lookers tightly and opened his mouth so wide that it resembled a cave.

"Oh, my—my eye!" he bellowed, and this set everybody but the victim to laughing.

But it proved one fact beyond a doubt, that Spot was not blackened up artificially, and when reputable and well-known merchants came forward, and not only recognized, but vouched for them both, the whole thing became so ludicrous that the judge ordered their discharge amid a blizzard of laughter, and both Sam and Spot left the court-room free as birds.

But it cost Sam twenty-five dollars, just the same, for his lawyer, although that was nothing under the circumstances.

And that old fool of a magistrate, who thought he had found a mare's nest, and was anxious to get his name in print as the unearther of a big diabolical plot to blow up Canada, had more than he wanted of it before he heard the last of it, for Sam, having no other means of redress, gave the whole thing away to an Ogdensburg reporter, who wrote it up to the queen's taste.

Indeed, the laugh was on him wherever he went, and in less than a month he was laughed out of office, and was glad to go into obscurity.

Sam found that his hopes of trade had brightened his rivals during his trouble, and he was not long in tumbling to the racket straight.

"But it is all your fault, Spot," said he, after they were ready to continue their journey to Ottawa, Canada.

"It is the same old story of Johnny Fresh."

"Oh, my, how dat?" asked Spot.

"Same old caper. You made a guy of yourself, as usual, and got roped in."

"I war no dominiter," he protested.

"Well, I wish you were, and would get blown up with some of the stuff."

"Golly! I guess you blow me up bad 'nough."

"That's all right. But I shall write home and tell them to send me somebody else in your place, and in the meantime, if you get into another scrape, I shall leave you to your fate. You are altogether too utter for my use. Now pull yourself together, and see to getting those grips and trunks ready for Ottawa," he added, and the discouraged Spot started mournfully to the task.

CHAPTER X.

OTTAWA may be described as a city and port of entry of the province of Ontario, capital of Carleton county and of the Dominion of Canada, on the Ottawa river, at the mouth of the Rideau.

It is a beautiful city, and the Parliament House is a structure worthy of Canada, of the true and stanch dominion of the queen. In fact, taken altogether, it is one of the most beautiful cities of the north.

But it so happened that there was great excitement in Ottawa at the time Sam Spry visited it, for news had just come in that General Middleton had achieved a great victory over the rebel half-breeds in the northwest, and everybody was rejoicing, the city being full of visitors and strangers.

This, of course, made business good, and Sam had little difficulty in getting orders from nearly every dealer in the city, being in constant telegraphic communication with Jub & Spud at New York so as to have quick instructions.

Spot was behaving himself quite well, for his late experiences had salted him very much, but he got very enthusiastic over the war talk of the people, and whenever he found a good opportunity where anybody was willing to listen and at the same time believe, he would reel off some gay old stories regarding his own warlike experiences during the Southern rebellion, although he didn't appear to have much of an idea as to when that great event took place.

He got one of the porters of the hotel to listen to him, and began to let himself out to the old man, intending to astonish him.

He was giving it to him that he had served as a colonel in one of the colored regiments, and was proceeding to go into details regarding the battles he had taken a leading part in.

Now, this old colored porter was something of a liar himself in a quiet way, and he listened somewhat nervously as Spot went on.

But finally he could stand it no longer.

"Now, you jus' hol' on dar 'til I axes you a few questions, chile," said he. "How ole is you?"

"Done gone twenty-free," replied Spot, unsuspiciously.

"Twenty-free! Chile, you is away off your reckonin'," said the old man.

"How dat?" asked Spot, thoughtfully.

"Wal, I has too much respec' fo' de profession ob liar to go inter putticklers. But you is either de biggest liar in de business, or you war de youngest colonel in de war."

"How you make dat aspersions?" demanded Spot, with a show of indignation.

"Why, dat war happen befo' you war weaned," said the old man, laughing derisively.

"Go 'way! What you know 'bout it? You won dar—you's a bloody Connuck."

"But I am'n't a liar. Dat war happen when you war a pickaninny. Go 'way, chile. You is talkin' 'bout somebody else—not 'bout yourself; an' besides dat, you is talkin' to an ole Southern slave."

"Dat so?" mused Spot.

"Yea, sah. You is warthin' to an ole veteran—a man dat knows all about it. Know who I is?"

"No. Who is you?"

"Ise de original Uncle Tom," said the old porter, traighening himself up.

"Go 'way."

"I can prove it by everybody in Ottawa. So, you see, honey, dat you don want to squander much ob you original sin on me. Go 'long! You a colonel in de war!" and getting up from where he had been sitting he walked off, laughing.

Spot gazed after him a moment, and then scratched his woolly head thoughtfully.

"I guess de one ob boof ob us hab made a mistake," said he, finally.

But he was taken down so much that he didn't say anything more about his war experiences while in Ottawa.

Sam Spry, however, was doing first rate, and besides the business telegrams, he also got congratulatory one from Mr. Spud, and two or three from the different salesmen in the house, but not a word from old Jub. Indeed, Sam was doing altogether too well to silt him, and he only hoped something would happen to break him up and set him adrift.

But he wouldn't give it up yet that his head was not a big one, and that he had not broken up any little tenderness that had or might have existed between Sam Spry and his daughter Anule.

Yea, it seemed really like "war times" in Ottawa, and Sam took advantage of it by sending to New York for several kinds of goods that he had not hitherto carried, and which were likely to be called for during the excitement and arming of troops.

Indeed, old Jub was obliged to admit that Sam was smarter than greased chain lightning, although he was careful not to say as much in the bosom of his family. Nevertheless, the bosom of that family was kept well posted by an interested and interesting member of Mr. Spud's family.

But to return to Ottawa.

The last night of their stay there, the boys and young fellows held what they called an Indian lark in commemoration of the downfall of the Indian or half-breed rebellion.

Dozens of them were disguised as Indians, and were marching around with torches, fixed up in feathers and war paint, and doing their level best to make night hideous.

Great crowds followed them to see their wild antics, and of course it was just like Spot to get as close as he could to them, for whenever there was anything to be seen, he wanted a front seat.

Naturally enough, he didn't fully understand the significance of the affair, but rather considered it a carnival of some sort.

But it was not long before some of the fellows in their disguises got on to him, and in less than two minutes he was surrounded by what seemed to be a first-class band of howling Indians, bent on having his scalp.

At first he was inclined to regard it as a joke, but when they began to dance around him, flourishing their tomahawks and scalping knives, and yelling a most confusing sort of jargon, he concluded that they must mean business, and that of a decidedly unpleasant nature.

So he tried to get away, but the more he tried the closer the Indians gathered about him, the louder did they yell, and the nearer did they come to actually taking his scalp.

"Pollicemans!" yelled Spot, but this only made matters worse for him, for they began to kick and hustle him around, calling him all sorts of strange names in a strange tongue.

"Murder! murder!" yelled Spot, and then they went to make it lively for him some more.

They stooped him on his head in the mud, and completely ruined his fancy hat; then they rolled him in the mud, and ruined those clothes of which he was so proud.

The more he yelled the more did the spirit of mischief seem to increase in his tormentors, while those not actually engaged in giving him the war-dance regarded it as very funny.

And so, perhaps, it would have been had they not carried it so far.

After nearly frightening the life out of the poor coon, they formed in two parallel lines, between which he was to run the gantlet for his life.

Spot really believed it was for his life, and that the Indians had captured the city, and the way he did tear over the ground was a caution.

But he couldn't run fast enough to avoid the blows aimed at him, and although none of them were bloody ones, yet he imagined that every one was drawing his life current.

A wilder-looking coon was never seen on top of the earth, and at the same time he was so frightened that he didn't tumble even when he heard the crowd laugh ready to split.

But even after running the gantlet his troubles were not over with.

"They seized him, rushed him down to the river, tumbled him into a dug-out, and shoved it out into the stream without oars or paddle.

However, he was glad to escape from them, although in the darkness he hadn't the slightest idea of where he was or where he was going.

But Sam Spry finally heard of how they were mal-

"Come off!"

"Din you see 'em?"

"No, but I saw a lot of boys playing Indian."

"Playin'!"

"Yea, and they had some fun with you, did they?"

"Fun!"

"Yea, it looks like it."

"Fun! Whar am my best hat—whar am my good clus?" he asked, despairingly.

"Haven't you got them on?"

"Oh, Lord!"

"Why, they frightened you out of your boots," said Sam, laughing.

"Oh, my! oh, yes. I should say so," he beamed. "You have had just as much trouble in other places as you have had in Canada, showing that the fault is all yours. Here, come in here," he added, as they reached a clothing store.

Spot followed, but not with enthusiasm. He had lost all that in his engagement with the "Indians," but he could only obey orders.

Sam told the salesman what he wanted, and in a short time Spot was arrayed in a comparatively modest suit of clothes and a new hat.

Yes, they were indeed comparatively modest as compared with his ruined suit, but still they were "loud" enough to attract attention and speak for



The court officer went over his face with a sponge and some strong soap suds. In doing this he got some of it into his eyes. This produced a sensation in court, for the poor fellow closed his lookers tightly and opened his mouth so wide that it resembled a cave.

treating his man, and obtaining the assistance of an officer, he started for his rescue.

It was a long time, however, before he learned his fate, and then he set out with a boatmen to overtake him, while several officers of the law dispersed the "Indians."

Meanwhile, it was very dark on the river, although Spot could see by the lights on shore that he was drifting slowly—somewhere.

He pulled himself together as well as he could, and began to wrestle with every prayer he had ever heard in his life, and it is a wonder that his wool hadn't "turned gray in a single night."

Finally, after rowing and shouting for some time, Sam and the boatman overtook him. But he was in such an abject state of fright yet that he thought the Indians were after him again for the purpose of drowning him.

He yelled murder with all his might, and tried to prevent the boatman from getting at the rope attached to the dug-out, and all the while he did not appear to recognize Sam's voice.

However, they soon towed him ashore, although it was with the greatest difficulty that Sam could make him understand who he was, and that he was in the hands of friends.

Spot looked at him wildly for a moment, and then felt of the top of his head to see if his scalp was still there.

His hat was missing, and he didn't seem to be certain about the scalp.

"Oh, you big black oaf!" sneered Sam. "What's the matter with you?"

"De Injuns?" said he, glancing wildly around.
 "Indians! What Indians?"
 "De red devils ob de forest, who took de city," said

"De red debels ob de forest wha took de city," said he, tremblingly.

And Spot looked down at his big feet to see if he really did still possess his boots.

"Same old story, Spot."

"Too antecedent, too unreservedly new, too fresh. In short, as usual. Think of how many scrapes that same freshness has gotten you into since we started out, and how many lectures have I given you about it?"

"How war I fresh, I'd like to know? I jus went to see what de row war all about, when dey all set upon me," protested Spot.

"Yes, you look as though you had been sat upon," replied Sam, laughing. "Well, perhaps it's your luck."

"Luck! Call dat luck? De fact is, Sam, I'se getting sick ob de whole business, an' it am berry evident dat I wasn't cut out for it or I'd been made ob Injun rubber instead ob flesh an' blood," said he, despondingly.

"No, you are too loud. Now I will take you to a clothing store and buy you a new rig, but it will not be so loud as this one is, and then if you get into any more scrapes I'll just ship you back as freight to New York, where you will have to pay your own freight and lose your situation with Jub and Spud besides."

"And I'm a trifle weary myself, Spot. But I'll give you one more trial."

"No. I's had all I want. Dis yer Canada am de wuss place on top ob de ground."

"What's the matter with Canada?"

there's nothing the matter with Canada, but there is

there's nothing like having wild Canada, but there's
 always the matter with you."

themselves, while the hat was a glossy plug with a broad brim.

This new turn of affairs made Spot feel a trifle better, but it could not cure the lumps and bruises he had received at the hands of the insanguinary Indians who had forced him to run the gantlet.

However, he appeared out in his new rig the next morning, and looked as spruce as a brand new barber's pole, and although he walked lame, made quite an imposing appearance as he followed Sam to the steamboat station, bound for Montreal.

At all events, he was glad to get away from Ottawa, if it was impossible to escape from Canada just then, for there he had suffered the most, and been put through the liveliest course of sprouts that had ever yet overtaken him.

It is one of the most beautiful rides in the world from Ottawa to Montreal, and from there onward to old Quebec, and Sam, after writing out his orders and mailing them to New York, and informing his house that he could be addressed at St. Lawrence Hall next, he settled himself down to enjoy the trip, as he knew so well how to do.

And Spot by this time began to feel a trifle more like himself, and, to tell the truth, it looked as though he and the steward of the River Belle had been holding a consultation, for he braced up and down the promenade deck as though he owned every plank there was in the steamer, to say nothing of the spikes and machinery.

Sam had his eye on him and readily understood that Spot had been taking medicine for the benefit of the business he had organized at Ottawa, but he said nothing.

bruises he had received at Ottawa, but he said nothing, only kept his eye on him.

This was a prim old maiden who was evidently

'mashed' in the handsome young drummer, and was

doing her best to attract his attention. But it took quite a show of dry goods to catch Sam's eye.

They were all out on the forward deck, admiring the beautiful and romantic scenery, and this badly mashed old maiden was not long in finding out that the lordly Spot was Sam's man.

So she managed to intercept him when he was out of Sam's sight for the purpose of finding out who he was.

"Ah, my man, what is your name?" she asked, addressing him with polite coldness.

"Mine?" and you should have seen him lift his new hat and swing himself on a bow. It was too utterly ut for anything, and the lady nearly fainted. "My name am Spot, madam, at your service," and he stood with his hat in hand.

"Be good enough to tell me your young master's name," said she, at the same time placing a dollar in his ready hand.

"Sam Spry—dat is, Samuel Spry, mam."

"And his business?"

"De boss drummer in de world. All wot, two yards wide, warranted not to shrink or fade," replied Spot, proudly.

"But his business?" asked the puzzled lady.

"Drummer for Jub & Spud, New York."

"Oh, thank you," said she, turning away.

Spot winked his best eye, poked that dollar into his vest pocket, and went to see the steward.

"Wonder wha' dat ole ben wants ter know 'bout Sam for?" he mused. "Maybe she's his long-lost parient. She's ole enough to be, an' seems ter me I's heard dat he didn't hab no farder nor modder. Who know but dar am a romance 'bout it? Neber mind, dar's no romance 'bout my part ob it," said he, and then he told the steward that he wanted some whisky to bathe his bruises with.

This was all very well. Bruises such as Spot had received must be bathed in some sort of medicine. But leaving him to attend to his wounds, let us follow the smitten old lady.

Sam was pulling away gently at a cigar that cost him at least a penny a pull, thinking some of business, but more of a certain blue-eyed blonde with sylvan-like figure and peachy complexion with whom he had skated and danced, and of the two or three bright, gossipy letters in his breast pocket, in which the hope was expressed so artfully, tenderly, and modestly that they would yet skate and dance together again, when the maiden "of whom we spake" approached him, mincingly.

Sam glanced up at her, and at first suspected that he was about to be interviewed by the representative of some Canadian Woman's Suffrage Society.

"I—I beg pardon, but I believe I am addressing Mr. Spry, of New York?" said she.

Sam threw his cigar overboard (half-smoked), and was on his feet, hat in hand, in an instant.

"You are right, madam; that is my name, and—" "Yes, I see. My name is Miss Tendertoe. I live in Montreal, and belong to one of the richest and most influential families there," said she, trying hard to blush.

"I am proud to know you, Miss Tendertoe. Pray be seated," said Sam, opening a steamer-chair for her.

"Thank you. You are very, very kind," said she, taking a seat near to him.

"Pray don't mention it," said Sam, remaining standing until she was seated.

She hesitated a moment, and then touched her nose with a highly perfumed lace handkerchief, about large enough to wipe a doll's nose with.

"I trust you will excuse me."

"Oh, certainly," replied Sam, gallantly, all the while wondering what it was all about.

He sized her up. She was richly dressed and wore very expensive jewelry, and there were other evidences of wealth and social position about her, but at the same time she did not appear to be exactly right. But Sam was too much of a gentleman to notice a little thing like that, and notwithstanding he had thrown his last best cigar, half smoked, overboard, rather than smoke in the presence of a lady, he remained uncovered to hear what she had to say.

"Please resume your hat, Mr. Spry, for the air is somewhat—somewhat—"

"Robust," suggested Sam, seeing her hesitate.

"Exactly. How well some people can express things. But, as you said, you will pardon me?"

"Most undoubtedly," and he resumed his hat.

"What I wished to be pardoned for was approaching you as I did. I know very well that it was wrong and contrary to all rules of etiquette."

"Please don't mention it," said Sam, bowing.

"Thanks, but you so much remind me of a favorite brother of mine," and she sighed as she cast a "bewitching" glance upon him.

"You flatter me, Miss Tendertoe," said Sam, lifting his hat, politely, yet civilly.

"I assure you that I am very much in earnest when I tell you this, and on that account I beg you to pardon any seeming overt act on my part."

"Certainly."

"Oh, it seems as though I were really in the fond presence of my brother Edward. Your looks, your voice, your style, the very expression of your voice reminds me of him."

"I am pleased to know it."

"And you pardon my forwardness?"

"Certainly. And your brother?"

"Alas! he is no more to me now!" she sighed.

"Dead?"

"No. Married."

"Alas!" said Sam, now just commencing to tumble.

"Well may you say so. Marriage broke my heart. I loved Edward, but he loved another, and she took him away from me!" then she sighed some more.

"I sympathize with you, Miss Tendertoe."

"And that is what I need. Oh, I hope that this chance meeting will culminate in a settled friendship between us to say nothing else," said she, and again she ogled him.

"Nothing else?" asked Sam.

"Well, what I mean is—*is*—that is to say, if our acquaintance should result in nothing more serious than ordinary friendship," and then another almost fearful ogle.

"Oh, I trust that—"

Just then there was a cry in the after part of the boat, and a wild rush of the passengers was made in that direction.

Sam Spry excused himself and started with the others, for he thought he recognized a certain voice that made up the general cry.

CHAPTER XI.

THERE was a clanging of bells in the engine-room, and everybody was pressing aft, where the cry of "man overboard!" was being passed from mouth to mouth.

Then the steamer's wheels were reversed, and the port life-boat was lowered from the davits with two seamen in it with ready oars, while the passengers crowded the side and stern, all looking aft and asking questions.

Nobody seemed to know exactly how it had happened, but it was evident that there was a man overboard some distance astern.

Sam Spry looked around among the excited passengers, but failed to see Spot.

Then he crowded his way to the stern to get a view of the boat that was being pulled vigorously to the rescue, the steamer by this time being stationary.

He had hard work to get sufficient opening to see what was going on, but caught a glimpse of them now and then, and heard what others said.

"There he is!"

"They have got him!"

"Bully for the men!" and some of the lady passengers said even more tender things, and some one suggested the getting up of a purse for the gallant rescuers.

The excitement was so great that Sam could say no more, and actually paid a dollar without scarcely knowing what for.

But presently the boat with the rescued man drew alongside, and the tackle made fast, amid much excitement and enthusiasm, while eager and willing hands seized the ropes and hoisted the boat out of the water.

Sam forced his way to the side as it came up into the davits, and there recognized the rescued passenger as his man Spot.

And a moist-looking subject he was to look at, and as he doubtless felt.

Some turned away, and remarked, "Only a nigger," and the wildest of the excitement quickly died out as the bell changed in the engine-room for the steamer to go ahead again.

Sam was the first to help assist Spot on to deck, dripping like a spaniel from a swim.

"I thought so," said he, looking at him.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned Spot, looking wildly around upon the crowd without hardly noticing Sam; and meanwhile the man who had bossed the taking up of the collection surprised the two rescuers by presenting them a handful of coin.

"How came you overboard?" Sam asked.

"Hi?" asked the still bewildered coon.

"If you wanted a bath, why didn't you wait until we got to Montreal, or bargain with the captain to slow up and give you a chance?"

"Now dat?"

"What's the matter with you, anyway? Have you gone crazy again? What were you doing overboard?"

"Oh, Lord—oh, my!"

"I say, captain, have you got a wringing-machine on board? If you have, please put him through it, will you?"

This created a laugh, and just then the ardent maiden, Miss Tendertoe, approached.

"Dear me, Mr. Spry, what has happened?" she asked, with tender solicitude.

"Oh, nothing, only my man here saw a big fish in the water, and jumped overboard after it, I suppose. He's just about bright enough for that," replied Sam, laughing.

"Dear me, how dreadful! Did he catch the fish?" she asked, without seeing the guy he was giving her.

"I don't know. Did you, Spot?"

"Guess I cotch cold, all de same," growled Spot.

"Well, go down into the fire-room and dry yourself, after which come to me and I will chain you to a stanchion for safe keeping."

Spot glanced anxiously around, as though expecting to see some one, and then the men who had received the reward for rescuing him conducted the dripping coon down to the fire-room, where he was presented to the stokers as the man who fell overboard, while Sam and Miss Tendertoe walked forward.

Sam would have given almost anything to have been clear of the old mashed ostrich, for he wanted to smoke, be by himself, and think.

But his natural breeding and gallantry would not allow him to intimate as much, so he was forced to be polite and as entertaining as he could be, although he was terribly bored and all the while wondering what the old hen was driving at.

He couldn't tell her how, why, or what for, in seriousness, Spot went overboard, and so the subject was soon turned from that to the beautiful and romantic scenery which greeted their eyes on either shore of the turbulent Ottawa.

And this change didn't exactly please him, either,

although it might have done so had she but been another female of whom he was thinking, for he found her to be a "gusher" in poetry and description, and she insisted upon telling him of her foreign travels, of the beauties of the Rhine, the glories of Switzerland, and the wonders of Alpine scenery.

Sam took it all in because he was obliged to do so or appear rude. But it was evident that the lady had traveled extensively, and was not only well educated, but refined. Only to his mind she seemed a "little off" on some account or other.

But it is safe to leave them for a while and follow poor, unfortunate Spot.

The chief stoker, Pat O'Mally, stood him up in front of a red hot furnace, where very soon he began to make steam, as a stoker would say, and in a short time, as he turned slowly around and around before the heat, he became enveloped in a cloud of steam from his clothing.

"What happened ye?" said Pat, grinning.

"Wha' happen me? I war overboard," replied Spot, glaring at the coal-begrimmed stoker.

"An' what tuck ye overboard, I'd know?"

Spot was silent for a moment, and then said:

"Guess I mus' hab fall."

"An' war ye aslape on the guards?"

"No," growled Spot, turning around as one side after another became too hot for comfort.

"An' did ye fall over for fun?"

"Fun! Lots ob fun in fallin' oberboard."

"Sure but I understand that yees natures do most anything for fun," said Pat.

"Oh, you do, hey?"

"It's true for me, so it is. I hearn tell av a natures onct that drank kerosine lie ter make him light," said Pat, laughing.

"Very funny. Oh, my—oh, yes, very, very funny!" and he turned around again.

"But what did yez go overboard for?" persisted Pat, while the other stokers stood grinning around.

Spot made no reply. He seemed to have a far-away look that was saddening to behold.

"Sure, an' I think I cud run a donkey engine wid ther stame yer makin'."

"Well, pull de throttle, an' I guess I'll go," said Spot, and for the first time a grin overspread his face at the thought of his joke, although it was at his own expense.

This was appreciated by the grimy stokers, and they laughed heartily, which put Spot in even better humor with himself.

"Say, who dat wench up-stairs?" he asked.

"What wench?"

"Dat fine-lookin' yaller gal wid a bang."

"Sure, that's ther stewardess. Why?"

"Who am dat big black man wid de fancy cravat, diamond pin, an' white apron?"

"Why, that's Pete, ther head-waiter."

"Wha' he got agin me, I'd like to know?"

"Faith, I don't see why he shud have anything agin yees. Ye are strangers, arn't ye?"

"Neber saw him befo' in my life."

"Well, what of it?" asked Pat, becoming interested.

Spot turned around again in the cloud of steam he was developing before the furnace, and was silent.

"Pete's as fine a natures as Iver dopped a napkin," added Pete.

"Oh, yea, berry fine man!" sneered Spot. "Wha' he got agin me?"

"Sure, I don't understand yees."

"Wal, I met dat yaller gal wid de bang out on de after-deck, an' it looked like a mash right away from de start. So I jus' walk right into her affections, an' she seemed pleased. We walk out near de stern, whar dar was nobody lookin', an' I put my arm round her waist an' chuck her under de chin. Eberthing war gwine on like oil on de water, when all ob a sudden dis yer big buck dat you calls Pete rush out, smash me in de nose, an' knock me oberboard. Wha' de matter wid him?"

And the next instant he wanted to know what the matter was with the stokers, for they sat up such a yell that it was heard above the rattle and whirr of the machinery.

"Whar de matter wid yous? It may seem berry, funny, but I somehow fail to catch the idea," said Spot, glaring at first one and then another of the grimy, laughing mugs.

"What's yer name?" asked Pat, the first to restrain his laughter a little.

"Spot."

"Spot! Well, that's good, begorra. Spot, yer the equals av a circus!"

And then they all laughed again.

"How dat yer?"

"Yer made love ter Laura, ther stewardess?"

"Wal, I tole you bout dat."

"An' Pete knocked ye overboard?"

"Wal, I should say so."

"S'pose you found somebody with his arm around yer wife's waist an' chuckin' her under the chin, how wud yees fale about that?" asked Pat.

"She his wife?" asked Spot, open-eyed.

"She's his wife, an' wan av the biggest flirts that Iver a man was tormented wid. Sure, an' yer not ther fust man that's been knocked oberboard for makin' love ter her," said Pat, and again they all laughed.

"Am dat yer so?" asked Spot, after thinking over the matter for a moment.

"Beggorra, Mr. Spot, but it's true for me. Sure, the deck-hands always have the boats ready ter lower when they see onybody makin' up ter ther handsome stewardess, for they know ther'll soon be a man oberboard, an' they stand a good chance av a reward for rescuin' him."

"Am dat so?" mused Spot.

"As sure's yer black an' not white. Didn't they get at least ten dollars for fishing yees out?"

"By golly, I'd a swum ashore 'o' haf dat money," said Spot.

"Oh, it's great 'perks' for them deck-hands. Their passengers all chip in on their reward for gallantry."

"Wonder if my boss chipped in? But don't say a word 'bout dis yer, an' I send you down a bottle ob hot drops."

"All right, we'll niver brathe it."

By this time Spot's clothes were dried, and he made his way out of the dingy fire-room and cautiously found the deck again.

The incident of "a man overboard" had by this time been almost forgotten, and nobody seemed to

dignant husband's fist, that new plug went flying off his head, and yet, out of sympathy, seemingly, it followed its owner overboard.

It was the first object that Spot discerned when he came to the surface, and if a drowning man will grasp at a straw—what's the matter with a full-grown plug hat?

Spot seized it, and in his extremity used it for a life-preserver until he was rescued, but of course no silk hat is warranted to act in the capacity of a life-preserver and a good-looking plug hat at the same time, without a great deal of intermediate ironing.

But the hat was rescued with its owner, and he had

"Exactly. Anybody near you when you took your header?" asked Sam, carelessly.

"No, not dat I knows ob."

"No good looking colored woman?"

"Hey?" asked Spot, open-eyed.

"Any big colored man near you at the time?"

It was clear enough to poor Spot by this time that the secret was out, but he was bound not to admit the truth of it.

"I—I don't urtherstan' you, Sam," said he.

"What!" exclaimed Sam, sharply, and Spot looked wild and swallowed quick. "Come off!"

"I—I—wha'?"

"Come down to hard pan."



A wilder-looking coon was never seen on top of the earth, and at the same time he was so frightened that he didn't tumble even when he heard the crowd laugh ready to split. But even after running the gantlet his troubles were not over with.

notice him at all, and for this he was profoundly thankful.

As he sauntered aft, where the passengers were all engaged looking at the scenery, he saw the flirting stewardess flitting about, attending to her duties, but he quietly slipped to the other side of the boat, out of harm's way.

No more of that adventure in his. He was no hog, and knew when he had got enough, even if he was only a black man.

He took a seat with his face to the stern, so that nobody would notice him, his whole thoughts being whether Sam Spry would find out why he had gone overboard.

But during his process of drying a curious phenomenon had manifested itself. His new suit of clothes were made of unshrunk flannel, and the wetting and drying process they were evidently not warranted against, if warranted at all.

The result was that his trousers shrunk so tightly to his crooked legs that they looked as though they had grown over his skin, and they had gone up fully four inches in length.

As for his coat, the dryer it got the tighter it got, also the shorter, until it made him look hump-backed, and gradually became so short as only just to hide his back suspender buttons.

He didn't notice it, however, for he was deep in thought, and one by one the buttons yielded and flew off, but as this simply gave him ease, he failed to notice that, and went on thinking, also with caressing his swollen nose.

And as for that new plug hat!

You remember how nobby it looked when he left Ottawa?

Well, when he took that involuntary flying header overboard, on account of being in the way of an in-

it on all right when he was placed in a dripping condition on board the steamer again.

And yet it was of course thoroughly soaked, and the silk plush began to peel from the pasteboard framework of the body, looking at the same time like the skin of a wet cat.

It was at this point that Sam Spry went aft and be-beld him.

He had managed to get away from the festive old maid, Miss Tendertoe, by saying that he must look after his man, and there he was, looking at him. And it was a pretty sight!

"Spot?" he called, and the coon leaped to his feet. As he did so the shrinkages of his clothes became remarkably observant.

"Spot?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" moaned the unfortunate dark.

"Come here. What's the matter with you?"

"Me? Nufin'."

"Yes, it looks that way," and Sam, in spite of himself, was forced to laugh at the comical picture.

"Well, what was it this time?" he added.

"Wha' dat you mean, Sam?"

"What do I mean? Why, you always have some excuse or other for everything that happens you. How did you happen to go overboard?"

"Wal, Sam, I—I got asleep," said he, after a few moments' reflection.

"Got asleep! Where?"

"I—I set on the guard rail dar, an' 'uss I know I war—I war in de water."

"Oh, that was it, eh?"

"Fo' sure, Sam."

"Very careless of you, Spot."

"I knows it, but de jar and motion ob de steam-boat made me sleepy an' I lose myself."

"I don't know what you is givin' me, Sam."

"Oh, I have heard all about it, and I wasn't the least bit surprised, for it corresponds exactly with your general freshness, only I think it a shame that they didn't let you drown. Such rare veridency as yours is too rare and good for this earth."

Spot opened his eyes wider than before. He also opened his mouth as though to speak, but somehow he couldn't do it.

"Now get a good look at yourself," added Sam, leading him up to a mirror in the deck cabin.

It was as much as the poor coon could do to walk at all, so tightly had his clothes shrunk about him. But he did the best he could.

"Just get a glance at yourself."

Until now Spot had never suspected how he looked, but it is safe to say that if he had not realized that the reflection was that of his own person he would have roared with laughter.

His trousers half way up to his knees; the bottom of his coat half way up his spine, and that shiny plug hat looking so bad that a tramp would have turned up his nose at it, and that tall, loud shirt collar wilted and lopped down over his coat collar—oh, yes, he saw it, but could not laugh.

"Well, don't you think you are a plum? But you will get no more clothes until you get back to New York, mind that."

"Oh, my! oh, Sam!" he whined.

"Sure pop, and don't let it slip out of your mind any easier than your clothes will slip from your body."

"But looken dat hat."

"It sn't my fault. It was new only yesterday."

"But it wasn't my fault, Sam."

"Was it mine? Was it the boss's? No, good clothes are too rich for your blood, Spot, and if you continue

to wear those you have on, you will not be apt to attempt any more mashing, and therefore less liable to get into trouble," replied Sam, turning on his heel and walking away, leaving the disconsolate Spot gazing at himself.

"Oh, my! oh, my golly! am'n't dish yer turrable?" he groaned. "Wonder wha' happen me next? Wish I war dead, or back to New York."

Just then a brisk old party came along and took a look at him. Then he took a hearty laugh, and slapped his thigh, and swore he had never seen anything so comical in all his life; but Spot was hurt too deeply to either join or reprove him.

"Excuse me, my dear colored friend; I know it is wrong to laugh at a person in misfortune, but I positively cannot help it. If I saw a poor beggar in the street I'd have to laugh at him before I gave him anything. It's a weakness of mine. But I assure you, my dear fellow, that I sympathize with you."

"Yes, you seems to," said Spot, turning away.

"Fact, I assure you. I know how it is. You are the unfortunate coon who was flirting with the handsome stewardess and got knocked overboard by her indignant husband. You, unfortunately, had a new dannel suit on; you dried it, and it has shrunken about one-half, and again he laughed until the tears came to his eyes. "Excuse me, but how that I have enjoyed my laugh, I will be good to you. I'll tell you how to take the pucker out of those clothes in a half of no time, but you'll have to wait until we reach Montreal."

"Oh, my, please do, sah," said Spot, eagerly. "Go to a drug store and get a quarter of a pound of powdered alum. Dissolve it in a quart of water, and take a small sponge wet in it and go carefully over your pants while you have them on, and when they are dry they will be restored to their original length. Do the same thing with your coat, and then you are all right again."

"Much obliged to you, sah," said Spot, honestly. "That's all right, my boy," and the brisk old party walked to another part of the boat to finish his laugh.

"Now, by golly, I get de best ob Sam, after all de laugh he hab on me," he muttered, as he went aft and resumed his seat again.

How little it takes to make some people happy. But in a few moments afterward Sam went to where he was seated.

"Come, Spot, look lively; we are getting into Montreal, and you want to stand by to see the trunks and grips got out all right," said he.

"Oh, my—oh, yes," he sighed.

"And see if you can't worry along without getting into any more scrapes."

Spot made no reply to this, his chief anxiety being to keep out of the sight of that indignant head-waiter long enough to get safely ashore.

Sam had hoped that he had got clear of Miss Tenderfoot, but he found her at the gangway, all smiles and simpers.

"I shall be so happy to have you call on me at my elegant residence, and, indeed, you must. Here is my card, and I will send my carriage for you if you will make a time," said she.

"Thank you, you are very kind, and I shall do myself the honor of calling," replied Sam, although he hadn't the slightest notion of doing so.

CHAPTER XII.

LANDED in Montreal; bright, beautiful but decorous, Montreal, the home of winter's grandest carnivals, the most elegant center of progressive Canadian trade.

Sam Spry parted with Miss Tenderfoot without any regrets, although, to tell the truth, he was a trifle surprised at seeing her escorted to a superb carriage, at the door of which stood an obsequious, liveried footman. She even turned and waved her hand to him as she entered it, and this puzzled the handsome drummer still more.

Could it be possible that this lady, old enough to be his mother almost, and evidently a person of wealth and position, had fallen in love with him?

"Bah!" he ejaculated, and pushed on to the well-known St. Lawrence Hall, leaving Spot to see to the transporting of the trunks.

This pleased Spot, for he wanted a chance to find a drug store before going to the hotel, and after seeing the trunks safely in the hands of an expressman, he went in search of one, and was not long in possessing himself of a quarter of a pound of alum for the benefit of his shrunken suit of clothes, to be used as the brisk old party whom he had met on the steam-boat had recommended.

But he was all the while a sight to behold, and people laughed at him as he made his way through the streets of the city. But this he expected, and did not care for, since his way out of his trouble by the aid of alum water was so easy.

Arriving at the hotel just as the expressman did, the trunks were safely bestowed, and one of the laughing hall-boys showed him to the room that had been assigned him.

After Sam, it was too late in the day to do any business, so, after seeing things all right, he went out to take a turn about the city, so as to be better prepared for the morrow's work, while Spot locked the door of the room and at once began the experiment upon his shrunken garments.

He began by operating on the coat, which he hung up in the wardrobe after he had carefully sponged it with the alum water, after which he gave a dose to the vest, and hung that up on another peg.

Then he went over his pants with much care, and they were so close to his hide that the solution reached his skin the moment it was applied.

But he went over them with the fond hope that the alum would take the pucker out of them, and restore their original length.

And after working over them for an hour or so, he got sleepy. Then he dozed, and being in an easy sort of a chair, his big mouth gradually opened and he went to sleep, the thrilling adventures of the day being excuse enough for it.

But how long he slept he had no more idea than the man in the moon. He knew he felt very stiff when he woke up, and yet he was not certain that he had slept at all, for it was just as light as he had remembered of its being when he closed his eyes. What did it mean?

He very soon found out, for while yet rubbing the sleep out of his eyes, the door of his room was opened and Sam Spry entered.

"Well, what in thunder are you doing?" he asked.

"Nuffin," grunted Spot.

"Where have you been all this time?"

"All wha' time? Jes' set beah an' hab a little nap. Git so bimeby dat yer won't want me to sleep."

"Just been setting here and having a little nap ever since you came up here yesterday?" asked Sam.

"Yesterday! Amn't dis yer yesterday?" asked Spot, leaping to his feet.

"No, this is the day after yesterday, and you have been sleeping here for at least fifteen hours."

"Oh, my—my good gracious!"

"What the mischief have you been doing to your trousers?" asked Sam, laughing.

Spot remembered, and looked at his garments, expecting to see them as long as ever.

They were not only shorter than before, but were drawn so tightly by the action of the alum that it nearly stopped the circulation of blood.

Then he looked at his coat.

It was curled and shrunken until too small for Tom Thumb. He held it up and looked at it with sorrow, while Sam acted as though he would split himself in pieces with laughter.

It was a long time before Spot would tell what he had done at the suggestion of the brisk but seemingly honest and sympathizing man whom he had met on the steam-boat, and then Sam came very near going into convulsions over it.

"Well, Spot, you are as good as a circus, but you are a very expensive one. And the worst of it is that you do not ripen. Tell me, why were you such an ass as to follow the advice of that joker and shrink your clothes still more by soaking them in alum? Didn't you know that alum was an astringent?"

"Hey?" asked Spot, looking wild.

"Didn't you know that alum water would be sure to shrink your clothes even more than they were?"

"I don't know nuffin, only dat I'm sick an' wants ter git home. I'se tired," said he, sadly.

"Well, you look it!"

Then Spot tried to get his trousers off, but they would not come.

"Oh, you'll have to send for a surgeon."

"Wha?" he cried.

"Or some person like a butcher, who is used to skinning animals, to get off those togs."

"Oh, my, oh, yes, my good Lord!" he sighed.

"But you will have to pay for it."

"Oh, my, oh, yes."

"And they charge double price for skinning fools," said Sam.

"Oh, my, good Lord in de mornin', I spec so!"

"And when you get out of them, what do you think you are going to do?"

"Oh, Sam, don't ask conundrums!"

"Well, I shall have to get along without you this trip, and just as soon as you can pull yourself together and get into some shape I will box you up and send you back to New York as freight."

"Oh, my, my Lord, don't, Sam!" he cried.

"But what good are you to me? You are forever getting into some scrape or other and knocking me out of business. I wish I had left you in New York."

"Oh, my, my good Lord, don't, Sam!"

"Bah!" and Sam rushed away, leaving poor Spot distracted.

What was he to do?

His trousers pained him so that he knew something had got to be done in the way of getting out of them. So he tried to get his hand into the pocket in order to get at his knife, but it was so terribly puckered up that he could not do it, and his heart sank within him.

Just then there was a dull explosion, and three or four buttons flew across the room.

He instantly felt a sense of relief, and finally worked his hand into his pocket, from which he drew the coveted knife, at the same time wishing that he could jab it into the brisk old man who had supplemented his woes with a practical joke.

Opening it, he proceeded carefully to cut the legs down the sides, so as to get out of the trousers in some way or other. But it was a delicate job, and he drew blood several times before he was finally out of his dilemma.

But he finally succeeded in getting them off, and swearing at the same time that he would never be fooled again as long as he lived. Hereafter he would attend strictly to business, and look neither to the right, nor look to the left, "but keep in de middle ob de road."

It was a great sense of relief to get out of those shrunken clothes, but there he was, with nothing but his underclothes on, and not a thing to wear over

He couldn't go down-stairs he couldn't do anything but remain where he was. And yet how long was he to remain there?

He took a good wash and tried to pull himself together for a square think.

Where was Sam? Had he shaken him? If so, what show had he anyway?

He walked up and down the room and began to grow very sick. He even wondered if it would not be better to be dead.

But while he was thus agonizing, a servant came to the door with a big bundle.

It contained a new suit of clothes and a nobby derby hat.

He of course knew where they came from, and lost no time in getting into them.

The suit was a brilliant one, full of big squares and stripes, and well made up.

Spot smiled as he glanced at himself in it, and the shades that had lowered upon him only a short time before were quickly dispersed, and he actually began to smile.

Half an hour later he was down in the office looking for Sam, for he felt just then like getting out and doing business. But Sam was nowhere to be seen; so Spot went in for a breakfast, being very hungry by this time, and was feeling even better when Sam came in from his first business excursion.

"Well?" said Sam, looking him over.

Spot braced up on his shape and struck an attitude to show his good points.

"That's all right. But how long will it be before you spoil that suit with some of your smart Aleck capers?"

"Sam, I's done," said Spot.

"Done what?"

"Done nonsense."

"Well, I'm glad to hear it, if there's any truth in it. But I don't take much stock in you, Spot. You are no good."

"Oh, my, oh, yes."

"No. You are bad roots."

"Hey?" asked Spot, not understanding the word.

"You are bad luck. Whatever you touch turns to trouble. I think I'll shake you."

"Oh, my, oh, don't."

"I have had nothing but trouble with you ever since I started, all on account of your general style and freshness."

"Oh, my, I eat salt," said Spot, eagerly, for now that he had a new suit of clothes, he wanted a chance to show Sam how good he could be.

"Salt won't save you, Spot. Saltpeter won't save you," said Sam, shaking his head.

"Try me once mo', Sam," he pleaded.

"Well, I suppose you will do better than no man at all until I can get a new one from New York," said Sam, carelessly.

"Try me some mo', Sam. I do jus' as you tole me every time," he continued to plead.

"Well, I'll try you just once more."

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" he exclaimed, delightedly.

The next morning Spot marched behind Sam as he made his rounds among the merchants of Montreal, doing cheerfully and well what he had been taught to do, and, on the whole, giving first-rate satisfaction.

That night he returned to the hotel with the sample cases, feeling that he had done his duty, and Sam was not slow in complimenting him.

"Yes, that's all right, Spot, but you want to stay in your room to-night. It is dangerous for you to go out, Spot, for something will be sure to happen to you. Stay in."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"And another thing, Spot; you want to be more careful with those sample grips," added Sam.

"Why so?"

"Well, there are some very tough citizens here in Montreal just now."

"How dat?"

"A large number of tramps from the States. I have seen several of them, and you want to look very sharp to see that they don't waylay you and get away with those grips. See?"

"Sam, does you know me?" he asked in a tone of voice that had lots of sad reproach in it.

"Well, yes; but you want to keep your eye skinned for tramps, all the same. They might get away with you."

"Sam, you wrongs me. I may be unlucky about gettin' into scrapes, an' all dat sort ob thing, but I'se no coward."

"Well, I hope not, for if I thought you were, I should not intrust those valuable sample-cases to your keeping. But keep your eye open, especially when you happen to be out in the evening."

"Sam, I's bold as a lion."

"Well, I hear you say so."

"I'se bad when it come to a fight."

"I hope so."

"I'd like so' ter see a tramp come fo' me. Why, I can knock out ten tramps."

"Well, but don't brag too much. What you want to do is be on your guard, that's all," said Sam, and he left Spot to think it over to himself.

"Wonder wha' pnt dat yer in his head? I like ter see some tramp get away from me wid dem yer grips. I mash him all up; I knock de life outen him. Tramps no good; I can lick a dozen wid one eye blind an' one han' tied behind," and he felt of his muscle to see how hard and big it was.

Then he smiled, as though he regarded it as big enough for at least twenty tramps.

But he followed Sam's instructions and remained in his room that night without going out to show himself or his new clothes, of which he was exceedingly proud.

Yet, when he thought it over, he wished he could get at that cheerful, brisk, obliging old party who advised him to take the shrinkage out of his dannel suit by sponging it with alum water. He would just like to have him under a trip-hammer long enough to drive him into those same clothes.

The next day he was also on his good behavior. Indeed, he didn't dare to go an inch out of the beaten and regular path, remembering how unlucky he was and what was liable at any moment to happen him if he attempted to break away and row with his own oars.

But he felt brave all the same, especially as Sam

had warned him against losing the grips at the hands of tramps. He felt, in his mind, that he would just like to meet a few footpads, just to show Sam Spry what he could do.

This, however, was in the daytime, when such fellows are apt to feel more brave than they do after dark.

Well, it was a red-hot business day, and Sam put in good work, doing more business than he had done in any three days since he started out, in spite of "Free Trade," and it was dark before he got through.

Spot had been on his good behavior all day, and Sam seemed almost as proud of him as he was of himself.

"What's the matter with a sundowner?"

"Look at him!" ejaculated a fourth.

"Please stan' outen de way, gemmen," Spot said.

"Listen to him!"

"It's alive!"

"It can talk!"

"Where did it escape from?"

"Please get outen my way, or I—I—" said Spot, plucking up all the courage he had left.

"What?" exclaimed the foremost.

"Oh, come here!" said another, seizing poor Spot by the coat-collar.

"Mur—"

"Hush! or you'll never know which mule kicked

only in semi-ancient cities, although there are many in Boston and Philadelphia.

He felt himself over to see if he was losing any blood, and if his anatomy was still intact, and this examination being satisfactory, and he believing that the robbers had fled so far away that there remained no danger for him if he went out, he ventured.

He strode cautiously down the alleyway, and as cautiously gazed out upon the lighted street.

"Oh, my, whar am der perlice?" he mused, and then he became more bold and shouted for one of them, faintly at first, but, gathering courage, he whooped loud enough to attract official attention.

An officer ran to where he stood.



"Well, don't you think you are a plum? But you will get no more clothes until you get back to New York, mind that." "Oh, my! oh, Sam!" he whined. "Sure pop, and don't let it slip out of your mind any easier than your clothes will slip from your body."

Finally they finished.

"Spot, take the grips back to the hotel. I have got to see a man up here and will be back before long," said Sam.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" replied Spot, cheerfully.

"Remember what I said."

"Abouten wha, Sam?"

"About tramps."

"You bet, Sam. I isn't fraid. Gracious, I jus' like ter hab somebody try ter rob me," said he, proudly.

"Well, that's all right, only if you lose those grips full of samples, you will have to pay for them, and it will take you at least ten years to do it—don't forget that," said Sam.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

With this Sam started away, and Spot caught up the gripsacks and moved in the direction of the hotel. He was in a strange city, and was not exactly certain of his route back to the hotel, but he braced along with the gripsacks, glad that the day's work was done, and almost smiling the nice hot supper that awaited him.

But presently, coming to a corner where four streets met, not exactly at right angles, he stopped to look at the names on the gas-lamp, in order to make sure of his bearings.

In an instant he was surrounded by four forbidding-looking tramps, who might have come up the four different streets to meet him.

Spot started and looked at them.

All four of them placed their hands upon their knees and took a look at him.

"Wha—wha' you want? Who you lookin' at?" asked Spot, but he somehow did not ask the question in such tragic tones as might have been expected.

"Oh, isn't he a daisy?" said one.

"Isn't he a pink?" said another.

and then all four of them seized him, and before he could gather sufficient wind to make another outcry, or to finish the one he attempted, he was hustled, body and bags, up a near-by alley, where it was as dark as his own pocket.

But it was not too dark for those footpad tramps. They were evidently used to working in the dark, and as for Spot, he was too much frightened to work his jaws even.

They threatened him with death in eight seconds by the clock if he made the slightest outcry or the least objection to the proceedings.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" he replied, faintly, and then they went for him.

They not only took away his sample cases, filled with valuable goods, but they stripped his clothes from his person, leaving him with nothing but his underclothes on.

Indeed, one of them suggested that they take even them, and leave him only in his skin, which, indeed, he should be thankful to retain whole.

But it was finally agreed to allow him the use of his underclothes, for fear he might catch cold, and so, after cautioning him once more to keep quiet, on pain of death, they went away with the gripsacks and all of poor Spot's clothing, leaving him there in the dark, nua, too frightened to move out of the tracks in which they had left him.

CHAPTER XIII

"Oh, my, oh, Lord!" Spot finally moaned to himself, as he stood shivering there in the darkness that concealed his nakedness.

And then he began to feel around for the purpose of getting his bearings.

It was one of those quaint old alleyways to be found

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"I's been robbed; I's been used wus den de man dat went down from Jerusalem to Jericho an' fell among thieves," moaned Spot.

"What have they done to you?"

"Robbed me ob my two gripsacks full ob valuable samples an' got away wid all my clus," said Spot, wheeling around for inspection.

"How long ago was this?"

"Not more'n ten minutes."

"Oh, well, they have made good their escape by this time, so I will have to take you to the station the first thing," said the officer.

"Oh, my, I got no clus!" he cried.

"Well, that can't be helped; so come along."

"But I's almos' naked," he protested.

"That's nothing. Brace up."

"Agin wha'?"

"Against the law. Come along."

"Oh, my, dis yer am dreadful," sighed Spot, reluctantly following the officer.

"Come along."

He did so tremblingly, and, as a natural consequence, a crowd gathered and followed them to the station.

Arriving there, poor Spot was taken before the inspector for examination.

"Well," said the official, "you appear to be in hard luck. But I will remand you to the officer's mess-room for awhile, and perhaps we can get trace of the robbers."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" sighed Spot, as an officer led him back into a large room called the mess-room, but which was used as a sort of meeting or lounging-room by the officers.

There was nobody in the room at the time, and Spot, being left alone, naturally began to make an inspection of the place.

The first thing that attracted his attention was a pair of gripsacks, just exactly like the pair he had been robbed of, if not really the very ones. He knew how to open them, and soon convinced himself that they were the very ones.

"Oh, my! oh, Lord! Wha' am dis yer gru' mystery?"

Then he looked around some more, and on a chair near by he recognized his wardrobe, carefully arranged for putting on.

The mystery was growing deeper every moment, but he at once made up his mind not to wait outside of his clothes any longer for a solution of it, so he proceeded to dress himself.

He had scarcely finished doing so when Sam Spry walked into the room.

"Oh, my! oh, Lord!" groaned Spot.

"Well, are you all right again?"

"Oh, my! oh, yes! Sam. But wha' do all dis yer mean?" he asked, appealingly.

"It means that you were taken in, don't it?"

"Oh, don't be foolish, Sam. I's been outraged."

"And now you are enraged, eh?"

"Don't fool wid me, Sam."

"Fool with you! You aren't worth the while."

"How dat?"

"Because you are no good."

"Yes, I is. Wha' you mean, Sam?"

"Why, it was only yesterday that you were bragging that no robbers could get away with you, and what is the result?"

"Oh, Sam! oh, my! dar war ten ob'em."

"That is a lie, for I was one of them myself," replied Sam, laughing.

"You?"

"Yes. I wanted to see how brave you really were, and so put up the racket on you."

"Oh, my! oh, my!"

"And a healthy old brave man you proved yourself to be, didn't you? Why, you haven't so much spunk as a jack rabbit. Now take those grips and get back to the hotel," he added, turning to leave the room.

Spot was paralyzed again, but he paid no attention to the laughs that the policemen gave him as he walked out, and slowly and sadly he made his way to the hotel. But he felt aggrieved, and scarcely spoke to Sam in the course of the following week.

And yet he learned a good lesson, and was gradually getting down to the point where he was a valuable auxiliary to Sam.

From Montreal Sam went to Quebec. It is a historical old city, but that is about all there is in favor of it, for it is the dulliest old place for business to be found on the Continent.

At all events, Sam Spry found it so, as many a drummer had before him, and after working it for all it was worth, he concluded to give the good-bye to Canada, and get back again into the land of Uncle Sam.

Acting on this idea, it was not long before he found himself in the bright city of Bangor, Maine, where business proved to be very good.

Things worked very well so far as business was concerned, and Spot was very humble for a long time. Sam took in the principal cities of Maine, and at the end of a fortnight found himself in Boston, the "Hub of the universe."

Boston is no slouch of a city, although there has been much fun made of it on account of the belief every native has that no other so great a city ever existed.

And on that account they are loath to admit that the world produces anything that they do not either manufacture or have the control of; consequently, a drummer from any other city has a poor show there, for, lo and behold! they send out their own drummers to sell their own goods, manufactured on the spot, or in the immediate vicinity.

The regular Bostonian is willing to admit that New York is something of a settlement, and that Chicago is growing, and may in time become quite a city. But Boston never has, and probably never will, forgive Chicago for having a larger fire than she did. Indeed, it is said that the Boston big fire was put a stop to on account of a false report that it had burned over a hundred square feet more than the Chicago fire did.

But Boston is a healthy, wealthy, and wise old town, and besides that it is one of the cleanest, neatest, brightest, go-ahead cities on the earth's crust.

Cut that out and paste it in your hat.

Sam Spry knew, of course, what he had to contend with in drumming Boston. So he put himself in telegraphic communication with his house relative to prices, and Jub and Spud, knowing how close a margin they had to work upon, told Sam to get clear down to the selva and make it a point to astonish certain houses, even if he got below manufacturers' prices.

And Sam knew that he was in for it, and that the moment he announced himself as a New York drummer he would be certain of getting the laugh unless he could turn it skillfully, and so he began his work cautiously.

But Spot was bound to prove a card. He had shaken many of his loud ideas, and was now more quiet than he had ever been before.

The first day out was a tough one, for the retail merchants refused to believe that any New York house could sell a whit cheaper than the Boston wholesale houses did, and he found them thoroughly posted on the wholesale prices of everything, from a horse blanket to a wooden toothpick. Indeed, many of them refused to look at his samples at all.

But he had no notion of giving up. He was bound to send home some orders to New York, or work himself silly in Boston.

As for Spot, who had behaved himself so well since his Montreal escapade, he began to feel his oats again

by this time; being so near home, he felt more reckless and independent. Besides, he had not had a hydra for a long time.

And Boston is the boss place for almost anybody in search of fun.

True, it may not be found with doors so open as they are in New York, Chicago, or even Cincinnati, but there is heaps of fun to be found in Boston, if you only know how to get at it.

Spot looked the town over, and concluded that it would be a simple thing to do to paint it in sanguinary tints.

Something of even a deeper shade than the orange sunsets so often seen in New England, and he brought the full force of his intellect at once to bear upon the subject of "how to do it."

Sam Spry was too earnest and too busy to notice what his man was doing, or to suspect that he even thought of doing anything out of the regular course he had of late been pursuing, and so Spot was left very much to himself.

The second day in Boston was slightly better, for Sam had received extra instructions from his house, and was ready to grapple with anything. So, when night came, he retired to the Revere House, where he was stopping, with several large orders, which he at once telegraphed to New York.

And (fanny, too, wasn't it!) on his arrival at the hotel, who should he find there waiting for his return but beautiful Annie Jub, in company with her maiden aunt whom she was visiting in Boston.

The sly angel had somehow caught on to Sam's dates, and planned it so as to be there at the same time, and she was smart enough also to pull the false hair over her maiden aunt's eyes, so as to make her believe that she had an important business message to communicate to her father's trusted drummer, and that was how she managed to be there when Sam returned.

But, of course, Sam was not mad. On the contrary, he was delighted, and seeing how Annie was situated, he put in his most flowery and highly sweetened work in order to make a good impression on her aunt.

He gently insisted upon their remaining to dine with him, and then he suggested in such a roseate way that an evening could not be spent more profitably and agreeably than in visiting the Boston Museum, where the renowned caricatures were simply supplemented by a "Lecture Room" entertainment of high order.

Had he suggested that they go to a theater, that old maiden aunt of Annie's would have kicked like a balky heifer; but she could hardly find it in her heart to object to going to a museum, and afterward taking in the pleasures of the "Lecture Room," and Sam knew it.

The result was a delightful evening's entertainment, and neither of them enjoyed it better than did that old maiden aunt. The curiosities were very nice, but the old comedian, Warren, was better to her than a circus—probably because she had never seen a circus.

And after Sam had escorted them home, she was full of what she had seen and heard, also full of her praises of Sam Spry, a more entertaining young man than whom she admitted that she had never met.

And of course Annie did not disagree with her, but she had already made it a point with Sam to say nothing to her father of the supposed accidental meeting.

But to return to Spot.

Spot was in Boston, the home of some of the handsomest and most cultured colored people to be found in the world, and, naturally enough, he had no idea of being counted second rate.

He was a New York coon, and that he considered about the highest grade in the world.

But the high-toned and high-spirited Boston coons very soon tumbled to him, weighed him up and took his measure, full length.

The colored young men of Boston have a lyceum and gymnasium combined, where they develop their brains and muscles.

This was what Spot was after, for, as will be remembered, he not only considered himself an intellectual light, but a muscular heavy weight as well, for there was nothing bashful about him.

Yes, he made himself known to the officers and leading members of the club, and they took him in, resolved to jangle and caress him as a visiting representative of their race.

They introduced him with a flourish of drums and trumpets, and called on him for a speech, in order to measure him up further.

Spot regarded himself as fully equal to the occasion—in fact, to any occasion—and so he let himself out on a spread-eagle speech.

Then the president of the association proposed to make him a gymnast—an honorary member of their gymnasium—and the suggestion was received with great favor.

Spot said he should feel honored, and preparations were at once set on foot for initiating him.

"The first thing necessary is the testing of your muscular strength," said the president.

"All right; I's ready," replied Spot, throwing off his coat and vest.

"This way, please," and they led him to where a pair of five pound dumb-bells lay on the floor. "Think you can put them up?"

"Yes, dem's nuffin," said he, contemptuously.

"All right, let's see you put them up."

Spot stood between them, stooped down and grasped them with a jerk.

But he didn't pick them up, however, for they were fastened to the floor, and he nearly broke his spine in making the sudden effort.

"Ah!" said the assembled members.

"How dat, anyway?" asked Spot.

"That is to teach you that appearances are deceitful, and that you should never bite off more than you can chew," said the president, at the same time leading him away.

Spot was silent, but he thought it rather funny that such a snap should be played on him.

"Now, then, we will test your jumping abilities. Take this set of one-pound dumb-bells in your hands, stand here, and let us see how far you can jump."

"Oh, I's all right on jumpin'. I's de champion colored jumper in New York," said Spot.

"Very well. Now let us see your act."

Spot stood up squarely, swung the dumb-bells three or four times backward and forward, and then made a leap forward.

That is to say, he attempted to do so, but the platform on which he stood, and which seemed to be only a simple sawdust-covered floor, was in fact placed on rollers, so that instead of accomplishing his leap, the floor went out from under him, and he turned a somersault, landing on his head.

Two of the members stood him right end up again. "This is to teach you and to exemplify the truth that the wicked (and, alas! we are all of us wicked) stand in slippery places," said the boss. "Now be good enough to pull yourself together and let us test you further."

Spot grinned, but it was evident that he was not much in love with his initiation so far. And yet the members all looked solemnly in earnest, and of course Spot was bound to do the same thing, so he braced up and allowed them to lead him to the next phase.

"Have you ever had any experience on the horizontal bar?" asked the president.

"Oh, yes; I's boss on dat yer," said Spot.

"Very well; you will please exemplify your agility on that bar," said he, pointing to one that was about two feet higher than he could reach, but which looked all right.

Spot walked under it, looked to see if there were any more roller floors, and then made a jump for the bar.

Some mechanical contrivance lifted that bar at least two feet higher just as he made the leap for it, and of course Spot did not catch on.

And falling to do so, of course he went back again to mother earth, and she opened and took him in.

A bolt had been pulled, and Spot suddenly disappeared through a trap-door, which instantly closed again, leaving him somewhere in the darkness.

And yet he thought he heard laughing overhead soon after he had landed.

But after the lapse of three or four minutes a door was opened, and a lamp revealed to him the faces of those who were initiating him.

"Ah, there! How do you feel?" was asked.

"Oh, all right!" replied Spot, who was bound not to show a sign of weakening.

The president took him by the arm, and started to lead him up-stairs again.

"That was to teach you, poor, benighted man of the outer world, to beware of pitfalls and the unattainability of things you jump for sometimes. Let it be a warning to you to look well before you leap."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" sighed Spot, and by this time they were back in the hall once more.

"You are progressing finely, and we trust that the great moral lessons you are learning will never be forgotten when you come in contact with the everyday world outside. You will now show us what strength you possess in your hands, as manifested in a grip."

"Oh, I's powerful on de grip," said he, laughing, and thinking of his business.

"We shall soon see," said the president, leading him along to what appeared to be an innocent piece of gas-pipe about three feet long. "There, grasp that pipe, and we shall see with what force you do it."

Spot seized it with both hands, and put forth all the strength he had in a grip upon it.

In an instant he was blinded, for the force he put into that grip seemed to open a thousand little valves, from which spurted as many streams of water.

For an instant he was invisible in the sprays, but of course he at once released his hold, and the flow of water stopped as suddenly and mysteriously as it had begun, leaving no clew to the mystery, but leaving poor Spot as wet as a drowned cat.

He was trying to sneeze it out of his upper regions when the president took him by the arm.

"This is to teach you to beware, how you must be cautious regarding how hard you squeeze things, for everything in this wicked world is more or less juicy and liable to surprise you."

"Oh, my—oh, yes," said Spot, winking the water out of his eyes.

"You will now proceed to the final lesson and test, it being a single jump from a slight elevation to show the members what your agility is when put to the final test. Put forth all your strength, that your record may be even better than any of those who have gone before you."

Spot felt glad to hear that the thing was so nearly over, and so took his position upon what seemed to be a simple spring-board, raised about three feet from the floor.

"Now I will give you the word that will make you a brother in good standing, I trust. I will call—one—two—three, and at the word three you must be prepared for the leap. Are you all ready?" he asked.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" sighed Spot, and it was evident that he didn't hanker for the trial much.

"All right. Good fortune attend you. Now, one—two—three!"

At that instant some hidden and infernal spring was let loose on that plank, and poor Spot went as if from a catapult, whirling and sprawling through the

air, full twenty feet above the heads of the laughing spectators, and forty or fifty feet away.

But at the end of his flight he was caught in a strong net that saved his bones, although he was frightened nearly out of his life, and then he was taken down, hailed as a brother gymnasticus, and given some peppermint to revive him.

CHAPTER XIV.

SAM SPRY wondered what was the matter with his man Spot when he showed up for business the next morning.

But that was Sam's racket, backed by his firm, and after astonishing them he quietly turned them over to Jub & Spud for further dealings, and so created considerable of a stir in the mercantile circles of Boston.

And in doing this it took him fully two weeks in order to get through the city, during which he had many comical adventures, as did Spot, all on the quiet.

One of Sam's adventures in a social way is worth recording.

He had that day tackled a Mr. Spruce, doing business on Washington street in the same line as Jub & Spud, and, after repeated bluffs, had succeeded in attracting the old merchant's attention, for, although

they flew at each other like old time and long separated friends, much to the astonishment of the Spruce family.

"Why, Sam?"

"Why, Annie?"

And all hands opened their eyes.

"This is, indeed, a surprise, Miss Jub."

"It certainly is for me, Mr. Spry," said she, blushing, and suddenly toning down from her first exuberance, as Sam had done.

"Oh, so you are acquainted?" said Mr. Spruce.

"Oh, very well indeed," replied Sam.

"I should say we were acquainted. Why, we went to dancing-school together, didn't we, Sam?"



All four of them placed their hands upon their knees and took a look at him. "Wha'-wha' you want? Who you lookin' at?" asked Spot, but he somehow did not ask the question in such tragic tones as might have been expected. "Oh, isn't he a daisy?" said one. "Isn't he a pink?" said another.

He looked as though he had been trying to shoe a mule. In other words, all broken up.

But he wouldn't give it away and tell him that he had been initiated into the most toney colored society in Boston, and was now a full-fledged Gymnasticus, and an honorary member of the Lyceum. No—no, for he somehow had an idea that he had been made a fool of by those sober-looking coons; that the Lyceum was but little more than a revival of the old Sops of Malta, in imitation of what the white bloods of Boston had done years before.

He felt sore over it, both mentally and physically, but he wasn't going to let Sam know anything about it if he could help it.

Sam suspected something, but so long as Spot kept up and attended to business he had no disposition to call him to an account.

Spot felt certain of this, and although his head was swelled and every bone in his black skin ached, he was bound to do his best.

As for Sam, he was so busy that he had no time to bother with Spot, for he found Boston the toughest old town he had ever yet attempted to do business in.

"No, young man, you are bringing coals to Newcastle," was the greeting he received almost everywhere he went to sell goods, and it wasn't until he had received permission from Jub & Spud to sell at all hazards (for they were anxious to make certain Boston merchants sick) that he began to make any headway.

"I can beat your coals at Newcastle," was Sam's rejoinder after that, and he did.

Several of the merchants of Boston were paralyzed at the figures he gave them, and thinking they knew it all, they couldn't understand how any New York house could undersell them in goods of New England manufacture.

Boston merchants as a rule will not have it that they can be undersold by any manufacturers or dealers in the world, Sam astonished him, as he had others, by his goods and prices.

Now, Mr. Spruce knew all about the house of Jub & Spud. Indeed, the two families were on visiting terms, and Spruce was anxious to know how they could sell so cheaply.

So, after buying a bill of goods, he invited Sam home to dinner, hoping to pump him still further in order to get at the secret.

And Sam was always ready for a snap of that kind, so, after finishing the business of the day, he sent Spot back to the hotel with liberty to go where he liked, provided he showed up for business the next day.

Of course you know that Sam was a dandy when he humped himself, either for business or pleasure, and he didn't have to have a house fall on him in order to tumble, either. He was simply dy.

From what Mr. Spruce had told him he understood that he was well acquainted with Jub & Spud, and their methods of doing business, and he also strongly suspected that he was the very man that the firm wanted to make "sick."

So he accompanied the merchant home, cocked and primed for whatever might come to the front.

And Mr. Spruce was smart enough to see that his old rival in New York had sent to him one of their crack drummers, although he hoped to get advantage of him on account of his youth, and find out the secret of their success, and how they could sell goods even cheaper than he could get them of the manufacturers.

On arriving at his magnificent mansion on Commonwealth avenue, Sam was introduced to his wife and family, but what was a greater surprise all around was that Annie Jub was there on a visit, having arrived that morning, and on being presented

"Yes, indeed."

"And what glorious times we used to have rinking it, eh, Sam?"

"Well, I should say so."

"Rinking it?" the family exclaimed in chorus.

"Certainly. Why, it's all the rage in New York. Don't you rink here in Boston?" she asked, turning to Miss Philomel Spruce.

"Be good enough to explain, Annie. We fail to comprehend the eccentricities of your vocabulary," said the highly educated Boston girl.

"What! Don't catch on? Why, roller-skating, of course. We call it rinking, don't we, Sam?"

"To be sure we do, Miss Jub."

"Oh, yes, we have lots of rinks, just the same as you do in New York," said Fannie Spruce, Annie's friend and school-mate.

"Yes, indeed; you must not suppose that New York has everything in the world," said Mrs. Spruce.

And so the conversation went on until dinner-time, after which Sam took Annie and the three Spruce girls to the theater, leaving the old man completely in the lurch so far as getting a chance to pump the young drummer was concerned.

But he got hunk by writing a letter to old Jub, congratulating him on his speedy prospect of having a son-in-law in the person of his most cheeky and successful drummer, at the same time telling him of the accidental meeting at his house.

"That will rattle the old cuss if I cannot get at the secret of his business, and there is some satisfaction in that," said Spruce, as he posted the letter that night.

The result of that exceedingly friendly letter was a peremptory order by telegraph for Annie Jub to return home at once from her indignant father, although in the meantime Sam and his beautiful daughter had been much in each other's company, to the great de-

light of old Spruce, who knew how proud Jub was, and what a big marriage he expected to negotiate for her.

Everybody but old Spruce was surprised at Annie's sudden recall from a friendly visit where she had often been before. Even Sam could not account for it, unless there was sickness in the family, for, of course, he never suspected that Spruce had given them away.

And there was a beautiful domestic row when Jub returned that evening, after having received Spruce's letter, for the old man had blood in his eye and fight under his skull. Nor was Mrs. Jub in a most Christian-like temper, for the day was hot, and she had made it lively for the servants before his arrival.

peremptory telegram for her to return at once. Mr. Spruce wrote me that he took Sam Spry home with him to dinner, and there was Annie, just as though expecting him, and he took her to the theater in the evening. A nice piece of business, isn't it?"

"A mere accident, of course."

"Oh, no doubt—not the slightest doubt of that," he answered, sneeringly.

"And you are mean enough to insinuate that I instigated the meeting? You are a brute, and I hope she will marry the young drummer. She would certainly do far better than I did," said she, sweeping from the room.

That settled Mr. Jub.

garments, for he wanted to show off his line of bustles, corsets, hoop-skirts and garters.

And Spot was only too glad of the opportunity, being very proud of his shape, and took every opportunity he could get to show it, and which he could do very well with his close-fitting drawers and undershirt.

Sam tried one place and sold a fair bill of goods, using Spot, as usual, to show them off on, and he afterward sold small bills to several other dealers, but as a general thing he found business exceedingly dull, and dealers unwilling to buy.

Finally he struck a dealer who had the reputation of being the ugliest man in town.



"Oh, my, dis yer am drefful," sighed Spot, reluctantly following the officer. "Come along." He did so tremblingly, and, as a natural consequence, a crowd gathered and followed them to the station.

But her husband was all charged for the fray, and rushed into her presence as hot and as red as a lobster just out of the pot.

"This is pretty business, Mrs. Jub, is it not?" was his first demand upon his better half. "And so motherly in you—so high-toned?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Jub? Are you mad?" she asked, glaring at him.

"Am I mad? Am I human?"

"Well, I am not so positive about that, for it does not seem as though a man with any humanity in his nature would try to kick up a row with his wife on a hot day like this."

"Bah! Mrs. Jub—bah!" he cried.

"Oh, you have turned either sheep or goat!" said she, laughing mockingly.

"Yes, I am fully persuaded that I am a goat, and that I was one when I married you."

"On the contrary, I heard many people say that they never saw such a sheepish-looking bridegroom as you were. So go on with your 'bah' Mr. Jub."

"And there isn't the slightest doubt in my mind but that you are a party to the family disgrace. It is just like you. It is just what I might have expected for marrying into a family with a low strain of blood," said he, hotly.

"Mr. Jub, shut up, or you will arouse that strain of blood to your sorrow. Has the heat affected you, or are you simply showing off your natural disposition? What is the matter with you, anyway?"

"How about Annie, tell me that?"

"What has happened her?" she asked, quickly.

"Oh, you know very well."

"Mr. Jub, you are a fool."

"I don't wonder you say so."

"What has happened Annie? Have you heard from her—tell me quickly."

"Yes, I have heard from her, and I have sent a

He knew that his wife's spinal column was dangerously elevated, and the only satisfaction left him was to kick the house cat, which he at once proceeded to do most vigorously.

But Sam Spry kept right along with his business, never suspecting that there would be a domestic storm on his account, and by dint of hard work managed to pick up a few orders every day, while Spot picked up frequent adventures, as usual.

His long stay in Boston, and associating with the swell coons of the Hub, made him a more pronounced dude than ever, and as for a swell, there was no match for him there.

But Sam kept him right down to business, and wouldn't allow him to put on any airs during the time, for he was terribly in earnest about picking up orders in Boston, both for the purpose of astonishing the firm, and several other drummers who had been unsuccessful there, as well as to win a few bets from his fellow clerks.

However, he finally finished Boston and went from there to Worcester, a dull but handsome little inland city near the center of the State.

"A short horse is soon curried," and so Sam got through with Worcester in one day, doing but little business, and then he shot out for bright and beautiful Springfield, where he hoped to do better, of course. And it was at Springfield that another one of those curious things happened to Spot.

You know there was always something or other happening to him, sometimes brought on by himself, and sometimes worked out through the mischievous brain of his master, Sam Spry.

I won't say how this came about, but allow the reader to form his own conclusions.

It was the day after their arrival there, and Sam was bent on business.

So he told Spot to put on his most fanciful under-

garments, but he made up his mind to sell him a bill of goods.

"Put in your best licks here, Spot," said Sam, as they were about entering the store.

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" said he, bracing up.

"Ah, good-morning. Mr. Runner, I believe!" said Sam, approaching the only individual in the store.

"Yes," was the gruff response.

"I am glad to meet you. A glance at that card will convince you who I am," and Sam handed him his business card.

"A drummer, eh?"

"Yes, sir, representing a house of whom you have undoubtedly heard."

"Yes, I've heard of it, and been bored by their confounded drummers."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, but never a one of them ever sold me a dollar's worth; any more than you will," said he, turning away, abruptly.

"Well, sir, we have a new line of goods now which I am certain you will like."

"And I am certain I will not, so you had as well move on and save time."

"Allow me to show you some new samples of goods which we are selling at a remarkably low figure. Spot, adjust the Duchess of Edenborough skirt and bustle, together with the Pauline corset."

"Oh, my! oh, yes."

"I tell you it will do no good. I will not buy. I have all the stock on hand that I want."

"Very well, Mr. Runner, but at the same time you certainly will not object to seeing something new in your line of trade."

"I do object. Confound you, which knows the most about it, you or I?" he demanded.

"Don't get excited, Mr. Runner. Now just ob-

serve these three articles of female ware," he added, turning to Spot, who by this time had shed his outer garments and donned the articles in question. The crusty storekeeper looked around, and for the first time saw Spot.

"What—what in thunder is this?" he cried, starting back, in astonishment.

"This is my man Spot, whom I take along with me and use as a dummy to show off my goods on. Now just—"

"Now just you get out of here. Confound your impudence. Suppose some of my lady customers should happen in while that coon of yours is dressed up like that? It would ruin my business. Get out of here, I say."

"But one moment," protested Sam.

"Dis yer am de reg'lar New York caper, sah," said Spot, coming to Sam's assistance.

"Oh, it is, eh?" roared the indignant merchant, rushing behind his counter.

Bringing out a pair of big pistols, he covered Spot with them both.

"And *this* is the Springfield caper. Git!"

"Wa—wa—oh, Lord! oh, my! oh, yes!" cried the terrified moke, and turning, he fled from the store, dressed just as he was.

In vain Sam tried to stop him, to call him back, knowing that he was more frightened than hurt, and then hastily closing up the gripsacks, he seized them and rushed out of the store after him, feeling certain that he would get into trouble.

And right he was in that respect, for no sooner did that frightened coon get out on the sidewalk than people began to laugh as he made a dash up the street.

Boys followed him, yelling and shouting; dogs joined in the chase, barking like mad, and two or three sleepy policemen were roused by the racket and also joined in, thinking that some "freak" or other had escaped from a dime museum.

There hadn't been so much excitement in Springfield since the last circus visited it. Those who couldn't join in the chase after the poor frightened ducky, leaned out of their windows and sicked on the dogs, or called upon somebody to shoot him.

But after running about half a mile the bold policemen overhauled him and took him straight to the station-house, followed by Sam and the laughing crowd.

They yanked the unfortunate moke up before the police captain several minutes before Sam could work his way into the room in order to explain.

"What have you here?" asked the captain of the officers who made the arrest.

"I give it up, captain; but he's a bronze lunatic, I should say," replied one of the officers.

"Well, he looks like it, surely. Who are you, anyway?" he added, turning to Spot.

"I's no lunatic, boss," replied Spot.

"Well, what are you, then?"

"I's a drummer, sah."

"A drummer! What band do you belong to that has such a regalla as this?"

"I's a dry goods drummer. Leastways, I's a drummer's dummy, an' a man war gwine ter shoot me full ob holes up yer, an' I run outen de place while I war able fo' ter hold war, an' de police tooken me in, sah."

"Which was the proper thing for them to do. Where is your boss?"

"I d'know. 'Speets he's killed, fo' old Runner war jus' coverin' him wid guns when I lit out."

"Oh, I begin to understand. You are New York drummers, and tried to sell Mr. Runner, eh?"

"Dat am so, sah."

"Take him into the back room and see if you can find the other fellow," said the captain, and Spot was hustled out of sight of the jeering crowd.

Presently Sam put in an appearance with a good-natured smile on his handsome face.

"Have you got my What-is-it here?" he asked, going up to the captain's desk.

"Well, we have got something here that has just been brought in, dressed in little or nothing but a hoop-skirt, corsets, and bustle, if that's a What-is-it," replied the captain.

"That's him. You see I am a drummer and use my man Spot to show off my goods on—a live dummy, so to speak—and in the course of business this morning we ran a against man who kicked."

"Yes, I know him to be a kicker. Go on."

"He wouldn't have it, and when I attempted to show off some goods on Spot, he chased him out of the store in front of a pair of pistols, nearly frightening the life out of him."

This set everybody to laughing, and Sam was shown into the room where Spot stood trembling, expecting every moment to be his last.

"Oh, my—oh, Sam! did he shoot you?" was the poor fellow's first sad question.

"No, he was only having some fun."

"Fun!"

"Yes—he wanted to see how fast a coon could run, dressed as you were," laughed Sam.

"Fun! Guess dar wasn't much fun 'bout it when I seed dem yar bullets comin' right outen dem pistols at me."

"Did you really see them coming?"

"Tere sho I did. Dat's what made me light outen dar so fast. Whar my clus?"

"Oh, I forgot all about them, but I brought the gripsacks. You'll have to go back and get your clothes," said Sam, soberly.

"Go back dar? I guess not, honey. I go wid my clus first," said he, decidedly.

"All right; I'm not going back. Take off those things and I'll leave you in charge of the police;" and poor Spot nearly fell down at the announcement.

CHAPTER XV.

SAM packed the hoop-skirt, corset, and bustle back into the gripsack where they belonged, while Spot was bewailing and lamenting his fate.

"Was yer gwine ter leabe me heah?" he asked, as Sam started for the door.

"Well, what in thunder am I going to do with you, anyway, in that harness? The police don't allow such undress uniforms as that to be seen on the street. Besides, I am getting tired of you anyway. You've got no sand in you," he added, with his hand on the door-knob.

"Whar I lack sand?"

"Why, you should have knocked that man down and set on him while I sold him a William of goods, instead of which you yelled blue murder and dusted at the rate of a mile a minute. No, I guess I'll leave you here and get somebody else."

"Fo de Lord, Sam, but dat's rough. Why not buy me some clus?"

"More clothes! Why, I have done nothing but buy clothes for you ever since we started, and I have paid you so much money that I know the house will kick."

"Well, wha I gwine ter do?"

"Oh, stay here and let the police take care of you. Of course you will not be allowed to go out until you get some clothes, and if you attempt it they will arrest you and send you up for a few months."

"Oh, my—oh, my!" he groaned.

"By the way, Spot, I guess that would be a good thing for you," he added, coolly.

"Good thing?"

"Yes, Spot, you are tired, and a few months' rest will do you good," saying which he left him alone in his misery and went out to consult with the captain.

They had a genial understanding in a few moments, and an officer was sent to Runner's store for Spot's clothing, while Sam went to his hotel to finish up his Springfield business and get ready to start for Hartford, his next stopping place.

In the course of an hour or so Spot came creeping into the reading-room of the hotel where Sam was writing letters, one of which was gilt-edged and carefully written and had the favor of Jeckey Club about it. That was no ordinary business letter.

He looked up as Spot approached.

"Well, you got out, did you?"

"Oh, my! oh, yes! But you isn't a-gwine to gib me de shake, am you, Sam?" he asked, in piteous tones.

"Well, do you think you will fight the next man that attempts to bluff you with a pistol?" asked Sam.

"Pistol! Golly, Sam, he hab two."

"Well, even with two or three. What did I take you for if not to do my fighting as well as other chores naturally falling to the lot of a drummer?"

"Oh, Sam, don't shook me!"

"Will you fight?"

"Oh, my! oh, yes!"

"All right; if you will fight the next man that attempts any funny business with me, why I will try you a little while longer. But if you weaken again before we reach home, I shall give you the grand and lofty bounce."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

"Mind your eye now! I have often heard you tell about knocking out the Black Diamond and other great boxers with the gloves. Now let me see what you can do with bare knuckles if occasion requires."

"All right, Sam," said Spot; but it was evident that it wasn't a pleasant dose of medicine for him to take.

However, everything being ready, they took the next train south for Hartford—one of the bright spots in the State of Connecticut—and Spot had a chance to pull himself together, and to think what his chances were.

Sometimes he yearned for New York, and vowed he would never leave it again; but he was dead stuck on Sam, and under most circumstances would cling to him through thick and thin. But he felt slightly sick now, for if he had got to fight as well as do other things that were expected of him, he wanted no more drumming with Sam Spry.

But if worst came to worst, he thought he could stand it until they reached New York, and then he would be comparatively free again.

Well, at Hartford Sam did some business, but it is rather too near the great emporium, so that merchants can go directly to headquarters, to be very valuable to drummers.

But everything worked lovely for Spot, and no occasion offered for him to do any fighting, which put him in the best of spirits.

From Hartford to New Haven was the next move, and there they found business a trifle livelier, as Sam had several articles that would be sure, to sell among the students of Yale College.

But, speaking of Yale College and the lively lot of students there, puts me in mind of one of Spot's adventures there.

Not only does the college turn out some of the best scholars in the world, but some of the most successful athletes. Indeed, more than one-half of the graduates are first-class all-around athletes who have won as much fame by their muscles as with their brains.

And, of course, there is always some sort of fun going on at New Haven, oftentimes of a nature entirely different from what the officers of the college sanction, for it would be almost impossible to get together so many bright young fellows without the spirit of mischief being present.

About the time of Sam's visit there some of the fellows had a great graft to set.

It was nothing less than a greased pig contest for the benefit of an old colored woman, and when Sam

got the tip he resolved to stay over a day for the sake of seeing the sport.

He found one young freshman there with whom he was acquainted, and through him got acquainted with several others, which, of course, made it more pleasant for him than being a stranger.

So he told Spot that he might have a holiday, but without letting him into the secret of the greased pig racket, knowing that he would be sure to get into it some way.

But Spot always had his eye open for anything that was going on, and one of his first moves always was to become acquainted with the leading colored people wherever he went and posturing for a big gun of the kind himself in everything.

So naturally enough he learned about the greased pig racket, although he kept it from Sam, fearing he might object to his taking a part in the business.

The colored folks of New Haven think very highly of the Yale students, for they get many a dollar out of them, although in a majority of cases the youngsters get a plenty of fun out of them in return.

This greased pig snap was put up for a good one by a party of them, although they guarded it like a sober, honest piece of charity, appealing to the young colored bloods to come to the front and not only have some sport, but do a good and charitable thing for a poor widow of their race.

They had bought a lively shoat weighing about one hundred and fifty pounds, and had not only kept him well fed and trained, but well greased from snout to tail.

This pig was to be turned loose on one of the commons Saturday afternoon, and each one who wished to try his luck at catching it was to pay a dollar for the privilege, the money thus obtained to go to the widow, and a general understanding that whoever succeeded in catching the slippery porker was to present it to the old beneficiary as well.

So skillfully did the boys work it that at least fifty came forward to take part in the fun and charitable work, and among them was the gallus Spot.

He, in company with half a dozen other colored sporting youths, had bought a ticket, and they were going to contend for the prize in fancy athletic suits, intending not only to capture the prize but to astonish the ebony damsels of New Haven at the same time.

Spot was always working some racket or other unbeknown to Sam, although he made up his mind to tell him all about this one, provided he caught the pig.

The affair had been kept very quiet, for it was almost certain that either the police or the officers of the college would interfere in the sport if it became known beforehand.

If they caught on to it after the pig had been turned loose, all right; they could jump in and help catch him if they wanted to put a stop to the charitable sport.

Well, at the appointed hour the colored bloods were scattered around the common, ready for the appearance of Mr. Pig, and those of the students who had the tip as well as their friends, were soon at convenient places to witness the sport.

Sam Spry was there, of course, for he would not have missed it on any account. Of course it was all the while business before pleasure with him, as usual, but he had not only finished his business in New Haven, but had completed the route, that had been laid down for him on leaving New York, and all he had to do now was to take his pleasure before returning to his employers.

But he didn't recognize Spot among the contestants, for he was gotten up in a loud baseball-players' suit, and strutted about among his acquaintances like a game chicken. Nor did Spot notice Sam among the many others, and if he had it would probably have dashed some of the airs he was putting on while posturing for a great all-around athlete, to the amazement of his colored brethren.

Promptly on time, and before much notice had been taken of the gathering on the common, a cart drove up to one of the gates and quietly slid that greased and astonished grunter into the inclosure.

"Dar he come!"

"Dar am de shoat."

"Dar am dat eely poark!"

"Look at de slippery sausage meat!"

"Dar comes de charity po'ke!" and other expressions of delight greeted the greased pig.

"Gemelton, look at it! Dat am my meat!" cried Spot, with a swagger.

"We see who dat meat belongs to," said another coon, not much in love with the big swagger of our friend Spot.

But there was no time to be lost, as they all knew, and besides there were about twenty good-looking colored girls outside of the fence waiting to see the sport and to reward the successful man with their smiles.

They formed a circle around that greased pig, who had been standing with his nose to the ground as though meditating ever since he had been slid from the cart into the inclosure, wondering perhaps what it all meant.

"Now, boys, see me capture dat pig meat," said Spot, rolling up his sleeves.

And while the others were making ready for a first trial, he made a dash for the pig, who stood head toward him.

The porker by this time evidently suspected something wrong, and when Spot went for him he went for Spot.

He made a rush to go between his legs, in doing which he knocked his feet from under him, and Spot turned a somersault, landing on the broad of his back amid much laughter.

It was fun for the students—it was fun for everybody but Spot, out of whose body the wind was almost completely knocked.

But the rush was up, and everybody who had paid a dollar was trying to catch that pig, paying not the slightest attention to Spot, who had bent himself up into a sitting posture and was gazing wildly around.

Here, there, everywhere, seized but escaping, squealing, grunting, cantering this way and that in the hope of escaping, went the pig and the crowd, until finally they rushed over Spot as he was trying to get up, nearly killing him.

But this gave him another chance, and as quick as could be he seized the porker around the neck and held on for dear life.

"Hole him! hole him!" cried a dozen voices, and the students encouraged him with their yells to do the same thing.

And Spot really intended to do so, for he was laying lengthwise on top of him, head to head, but the poor squealing pig being overburdened by too much deck load, fell over on his side and on top of his would-be captor, after which he freed himself as easily as a freshly caught eel and knocked over half a dozen other coons who tried to capture him.

It was the greatest circus ever seen in New Haven, and the students gathered in large numbers to see the sport, although in two or three instances they were obliged to scatter lively when that demoralized pig came anywhere near where they were standing.

But how they laughed, and how they chafed the unfortunate coons who were trying to catch on to that pork which slid through their hands or tumbled them over upon the ground.

The fun grew wild and furious, and the sable venues were urging the gallants on in the name of charity.

Spot, notwithstanding the hard knocks he had received, was foremost in the fray, and getting dumped oftener than any other coon in the contest, producing lots of fun for the spectators and his enemies.

In fact, the pig seemed to enjoy Spot's mishaps, for he gave him more opportunities to show off than he did the others.

However, everybody who had paid seemed bent on catching the pig, and many of them got so far as to seize him by the hind legs, only to lose his hold on account of the grease.

Occasionally they would make a rush from all sides, and when the squeaking pig made a dart through the envolving legs, throwing some upon the ground, while the heads of others would go together with a resounding whack that could be heard all over the common.

The students were roaring with laughter, and crowds of outsiders began to gather and enjoy the sport, while the sweating darkies and the squealing pig were mixed up in all sorts of ways.

Presently a policeman heard the noise and put in an appearance, feeling certain that something was going on against the law.

"Stop it—stop it!" he shouted, rushing into the crowd, swinging his club wildly about.

"Dat am my pig!" shouted Spot.

"No, it am my po'k, boss," said another, and still the rush went on just as though there was no officer of the law within ten miles of there.

"Stop it!" he cried again, "or I'll arrest you all!"

"Arrest the pig!" yelled the students, and while he turned around to shake his terrible club at them, that greased pig darted between his legs and he sat right down real sudden.

Then a shout went up that shook the city, while that astonished policeman sat there and felt of the top of his head, as though to find out whether his back bone had been driven up through his skull or not.

On went the sport, notwithstanding.

Once more did Spot lay violent hands on that wild and greasy pig, and once more did he go to grass, with two or three others on top of him.

The policeman saw a chance to use his club, and went for the fallen group.

Two or three of them got a thwack apiece, Spot among others, but still the fun went on, the pig was uncaught, and the riot un-suppressed.

Spot got away from the cop, and rubbed his hands in some dirt, bound to conquer or die.

Once more, after a deal of running, he got that now tired porker by one of his hind legs, and again they tumbled over. But Spot had a good hold, and, tired though he was, he maintained it, keeping the squealer on his side so that he could not rise.

"Who's po'ke am it now?" he called, loudly and triumphantly.

"Yours!" yelled the students, who had already laughed until they were tired.

"You takes de shoat," said his rivals, gathering around.

Just that throng came that terrible policeman again, and began clubbing Spot, who held on to his prize like grim death.

But the students made one of their renowned rushes, and swept that officer out of sight in about half of no time.

Spot was triumphant, but he had not won the battle without many bangs and bruises.

However, a rope was made fast to the prize, and, followed by an admiring crowd, he led the pig to the house of the poor widow, where it was formally presented to her, together with over fifty dollars paid as entrance fees.

It was a big thing for Spot, a big thing for the widow, and so far as the students were concerned, they voted it equal to any circus that ever dawned upon New Haven.

It was late the next morning when Spot showed up. There had been some sort of a kickup at the

widow's house, and he had evidently taken an active part in it.

At all events, he looked as though he had, for one of his eyes was closed, one of his lips cut, while strips of white court-plaster adorned his mug in a most comical way. In fact, he looked as though some humorous surgeon had plastered him up just for fun.

"Where have you been?" asked Sam, looking him over.

"Been to a grease-pig catch an' a reception by de widder," said he, with difficulty.

"Well, I should say you had been to a reception given by a wild cat. So you were one of those coons after the greased pig, eh?"

"Oh, an' I coteh de pig, too."

"Oh, you did, eh? Well, you are a nice-looking sample to take back to New York, are you not? Don't you think the bosses will be proud of you?"

"But I done coteh de pig."

"Oh, you think that will excuse it all, eh?"

"Sartin shuah, if you only tell de story an' show me up fus rate," replied Spot.

"All right, I'll show you up; I'll make a hero of you. Now, get the grips, and let us start once more for dear old, jolly old New York."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" said Spot, although under almost any other circumstances he would have hesitated about showing himself at the store.

But now he regarded himself as a hero, and expected to have a gold medal or something voted to him after Sam had told his story.

Well, about noon that day they bundled into the store of Jub & Spud, where a joyous reception was given Sam by his fellow-clerks and drummers who happened to be at home.

And a laugh went up for Spot.

"What is the matter with Spot?" asked Mr. Spud, shaking Sam's hand cordially.

"Oh, I gave him a holiday yesterday in New Haven after we got through there, and he went with a crowd and tried to catch a greased pig," replied Sam, laughing, as did the others.

"An' I did coteh him, too," put in Spot.

"You look as though you had caught something," said Mr. Spud, and then he led Sam into the firm's private office.

"Now, Sam, you have done splendidly on your first trip, and you may have a week's holiday."

"Thank you, sir."

"But look out for Mr. Jub—or, rather, don't mind him; he's down on you."

"Indeed? What for?"

"Oh, you sly rascal! all on account of Eliza," or, rather, Annie, his daughter. Don't mind a word he says. He is out just now, but don't mind him. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied Sam, thoughtfully, and at the same time a thought of future trouble crossed his mind.

CHAPTER XVI.

It will be remembered that Sam Spry promised to tell a good story about Spot's exploit with the greased pig at New Haven, to account for the various bumps and bruises and strips of court-plaster which adorned his mug.

And Sam was as good as his word, for he got the salesmen and porters together in the basement of the store, and there related the affair in such an exaggerated, burlesque way that poor Spot was at a loss to know why they laughed so loudly over his heroic achievement.

Sam had written to one of his chums in the store at various points and times, giving him an account of Spot's doings, and when he got back he had become quite a hero among the men in Jub & Spud's employ, through the instrumentality of Sam Spry.

Spot was also given a week's vacation, and he soon became a person of importance among his colored acquaintances, because of his telling such big stories of his doings on the road.

But what bothered Sam the most was what Mr. Spud had said to him regarding Mr. Jub, the senior partner.

Jub came in a few minutes later, meeting Spot first, however, and getting an outline of what had happened.

Then he went to his own private office, without so much as noticing Sam, who stood talking with one of his salesmen.

"What's the matter with his ribs?" the salesman asked, noticing the cut Sam received.

"Give it up, Billy, unless he has caught sight of Spot's mug, and thinks I have been having some fun with him instead of doing business."

"He has been very grouchy of late."

"Maybe the old woman kicks him out of bed."

But the matter was cut short by a gruff voice from Jub's private office.

"Spry, come here."

Sam and Billy swapped winks, and Sam started for the aforesaid private office.

Entering with his accustomed grace and *debonnaire*, he doffed his hat and extended his hand in the expectation of its being shaken as it had been by the junior member of the firm.

But Jub paid no attention to it, and motioned him to a chair.

"Well, sir, it looks as though you had been on a frolic instead of doing business," said he, coldly.

"Indeed, do my orders say that? I thought I had been doing remarkably well. In fact, I have received several letters from the firm saying as much, and Mr. Spud is so well pleased that he has given me a week's holiday."

"Spud is an ass."

"Indeed!"

"Yes." How came that nigger with such a mug on him?" he demanded, savagely.

"Well, sir, after having finished business at New Haven, I gave him a half holiday, and he took part in a prize for catching a greased pig."

"Indeed. And what business had you to give him a holiday, sir?"

"Well, I had got through with him, and there was nothing for him to do while I was making up my accounts and getting ready to come on. He hasn't had many play spells since we went out."

"And how many have you had during the time?" he demanded, even more savagely.

"As many as was consistent with my business, sir. Your old motto, sir, business before pleasure."

"Bah! you are a humbug, a guy, and a fraud, sir," said the old man, vehemently, at the same time striking his desk with his fist.

"Sir?" said Sam, rising indignantly.

He wouldn't have minded such language in a man he was trying to make a customer of; but coming from his boss, after he had worked so hard and so successfully for him, made him mad.

"How was it in Boston, sir?"

"My accounts and letters of instruction will show all that, Mr. Jub."

"Oh, they will, eh?"

"Most assuredly. Why?"

"How about Mr. Spruce?"

"I got a thousand-dollar order out of him, and he was so very well pleased with me that he asked me home to dinner with him."

"Oh, he did, eh?"

"Yes, sir, and I had the unexpected pleasure of meeting your beautiful daughter Annie there."

"Yes, so I have been informed, and, of course, it was wholly unexpected on your part," said Jub, with a bitter sneer.

"As unexpected, my dear sir, as it was pleasurable," said Sam, with his glittering cheek.

"Confound you, sir, what business had such a meeting to be pleasurable to you? Who are you, sir, anyway?"

"Sam Spry, by the grace of Jub & Spud, a New York drummer," replied he, calmly.

That made the old man wince.

"But what business have you, sir, a simple drummer as you admit yourself to be, to put yourself on an equality with my daughter, and give my friends to understand that you are something more than acquaintances? Tell me that, sir!" he roared.

"I have never given anybody to understand such a thing, sir; I respect your daughter, Mr. Jub, but I am not ambitious for such a father-in-law as I should get if I were successful in pushing a matrimonial suit."

Jub leaped to his feet.

At length he had a good chance for a row with his handsome drummer, whom he feared.

"Sir, young man, you are impudent; you are a rascal!" he thundered.

"All right, sir. Every man has a right to his own opinion," said Sam, quietly.

"And every man has a right to select his own employees."

"Most undoubtedly."

"Which right I shall exercise."

"Very well, sir."

"And you may consider yourself discharged, sir—discharged!"

"Yes, sir, discharged," said Sam, bowing.

"Yes, sir, and without a recommendation."

"I would not care for one from a man who discharged a man for so slight a thing."

"The interview is at an end, sir."

"Yes, sir. Good-day, sir," said Sam, rising to go.

"The bookkeeper will settle with you."

"Yes, sir. Thank you."

"And it will do no good for you to appeal to Mr. Spud; mind that, sir."

"A thing I would scorn to do, Mr. Jub. You are at the head of the firm, and I regard myself as thoroughly and effectually discharged. Good-day, sir," and Sam strode from the office, leaving old Jub flushed and angry.

"Wouldn't have me for a father-in-law, would he?—the rascal! I guess he won't," he growled to himself.

It was a smash in the nose for Sam, but he braced up and took it calmly.

As he was going through the store he met Mr. Spud.

"Aht seen him yet?" he asked.

"Well, rather. I saw him, and he just scooped me with four aces," replied Sam, laughing.

"What do you mean?"

"He has bounced me without recourse."

"What! Discharged you?" exclaimed Mr. Spud.

"Yes, sir, fired me out, body and boots."

"The darned old ass! But don't mind what he says. He's crazy, Sam."

"Well, I must say he talks a little crazy."

"Oh, don't mind a word he says. Go and take your week's vacation, and by that time he will come to his senses and see what a fool he is."

"It is very kind of you, Mr. Spud, and I don't see why you are not also down on me, for I have frequently spoken with your daughter, danced and skated with her, the same as I have with his, and there is just as much danger of my trying to marry her."

"Why, darn it, Sam, don't you be a fool because he is. Go take your holiday, and I will give him a talking to."

"Not on my account, Mr. Spud, for I consider myself discharged, and will not consent to have you intercede for my reinstatement."

"Then I'll go for him on my own account, confound his thick, bald head."

"Very well, sir. Any little pleasantries connected with your partnership affairs you can indulge in, of course, but I am done," said he, going to the book-

keeper, while the indignant old Spud went for his partner.

Sam was standing where he could overhear what was said between them, and he didn't have to wait long before the circus commenced.

"Jub, you are a darned old ass!" began Spud.

"And you are an old fool—fine co-partnership!"

"You don't know enough to get under cover when it rains," said Spud.

"And you don't know whether it rains or shines. What did you discharge Sam for?"

"Because I wanted to. How's that?" demanded Jub, with cold impertinence.

"It's a piece of your stupidity, that's how it is. You are an upstart—an ass. I know all about it. You are mad because he has paid some polite attention to your daughter, just as though he was not as good as she is—as good as you are. Why, confound your old bald

He was as mad as a wet hen, and wanted to fight somebody.

The first person he encountered was Spot.

"Ah, come here, Spot; you are just what I want—just as good as a sand-bag," and before the poor darky knew what was coming, Spud had knocked him over a bale of goods, and was dancing around him, trying to get in some more of his fine work.

"Get up here, you old bald-headed ass, and give me satisfaction!"

"Murder! murder! Police!" yelled poor Spot, trying to get up and escape.

The clerks gathered around in astonishment, and Jub looked from his office window, fully understanding that Spud was working off his fight on Spot instead of upon him.

"Come up here, you old bald-headed fool!" again cried Spud.

charged for so simple a thing, they all became indignant and heartily wished that Spud had pitched into Jub instead of venting his indignation on Spot.

But Spot regarded it as a good thing. He had never earned so much money in so short a time before in his life, and he seriously thought of letting himself out for indignant men to practice on while getting hunk for some imaginary wrong.

"But are you really going to leave, Sam?" several of his friends asked, anxiously.

"I really am. I have just settled up my accounts and got my sugar. Come out and I will set up the ginger pop."

They accepted his invitation, but there wasn't one of them that did not regret the step that separated them from Sam Spry, and Jub didn't need a telescope to see that he had made himself exceedingly unpopular.



No sooner did that frightened coon get out on the sidewalk than people began to laugh as he made a dash up the street. Boys followed him, yelling and shouting, and two or three sleepy policemen were roused by the racket and also joined in.

mug, I knew you when you were glad to work for three dollars a week and felt dressed up in a paper collar. I knew you when your store was a cheap gripsack and your counter a little tray. Why, confound your shoddy upstart, have you forgotten when you used to borrow a white shirt of me to go and see your girl, the present Mrs. Jub? And now, because you have got a little more money than this young fellow has, you take on airs and think you are disgraced because he happens to speak to your daughter. Bah! you are a finished ass."

"You mind your own business."

"This is my business."

"No, it isn't. I have charge of the employees."

"And you have discharged the most valuable man we have for nothing at all. Why, when it becomes known, you will be the laughing-stock of the whole trade, and as for Sam Spry, he will be worth money enough to buy and sell you twice over inside of ten years."

"Will you mind your own business, sir?"

"Yea, and I'd like to pull your nose as well."

"Don't you threaten me, Mr. Spud."

"Threaten you! Why, I would give five hundred dollars if you had the nerve to strike me once, so I could have a chance to pound you about half as much as you deserve. Bah!"

"Leave my office, sir."

"Oh, you bald-headed old ass! Forgotten when you borrowed my shirt, haven't you?" he asked, and then strode from the room, giving the door a deuce of a bang as he did so.

"I—I isn't bald-headed, b—boss" moaned Spot, edging away from the dancing belligerent.

"Yea, you are a bald-headed old fool, and my partner—" Blif! and again did poor Spot take an involuntary tumble at the suggestion of Spud's fat fist.

It was fun for the clerks, for Sam and old Jub. In fact, it was fun for everybody but Spot, who had not yet gotten over the effects of his greased pig racket.

"Hole on, boss, I—I weakens!" he cried, as he struggled to his feet again.

"Oh, you do, hey?"

"Yea, I's got 'nough ob dat."

"All right. Here's twenty dollars for you to spend during your week's holiday," said Spud, handing him a brand new bill. "Now go and have a good time and consider yourself a vicarious sacrifice."

"Wha' dat?" he asked, tremblingly taking the bill.

"Consider yourself thumped in place of old Jub—a bigger fool than you are," said Spud, putting on his hat and leaving the store for fresh air or something else.

Jub returned to his desk, muttering something about having a lunatic for a partner, while the salesmen laughingly gathered around Spot and asked him how he felt.

"Feel! I feel as though I had been foolin' round de boss end ob a mule. Wha' de matter wid de ole man—hah-he gone crazy?"

That was what they all wanted to know, and it was not until Sam had finished with the bookkeeper and joined them that they could make out what the matter was with Mr. Spud.

And then when they found that Sam had been dis-

But Sam was all right. He had several hundred dollars ahead and knew very well that he could get another situation whenever he wanted one. But he made up his mind to lay off and loaf awhile before taking up any sort of business again.

As for Mr. Spud, he lost no opportunity of telling what an ass he had for a partner, and in a very short time, as Spud had said, he was the laughing-stock of the whole dry goods district.

And not contented with this, Spud made it a point to tell his family all about it, knowing that it would reach Annie Jub and her mother and make it still more lively for his bald-headed partner.

"Hang me if I don't hope that Sam will catch the girl now, anyhow, or, rather, I wish that somebody would catch her that didn't amount to anything, and whom Jub would have to support all his life."

His own daughters almost agreed to this.

"Hang me if I wouldn't feel honored if Sam Spry took serious notice of one of my daughters."

"Stranger things have happened, papa," said one of his bright-eyed beauties.

"He's as smart as he is handsome, and old Jub is an ass," were his parting comments.

But, Lord bless you, Sam Spry had no more idea of marrying anybody than he had of flying. He was thoroughly business before pleasure, bound to make his way in the world before he thought seriously of any of his nonsense.

Spot, however, was the biggest man in New York. He went around among his acquaintances showing the twenty-dollar bill that Spud had given him, and said that he had won it by sparring with the celebrat-

ed Black Diamond, whom he had succeeded in knocking out in the third round. The twenty dollars bound up every wound he had ever received in his life, and he was perfectly happy.

And the news reached Jub's family, just as Spud expected it would, and when the bald-headed partner sought his home the evening following he was made very happy.

His daughter refused to speak to him, and his wife spoke altogether too much.

Not that she suspected that there was anything serious between Annie and Sam, for she had always shown her the letters she received, and those she sent, but to think that her husband should make such an old fool of himself warmed her spine, and she was ready for him.

There was gall and satire on her tongue, and before she had bestowed one half of it on him he lost his ap-

"I have a good mind to try it," mused Sam.

"All right; I'll give you a first-rate outfit and I know you will succeed."

"But suppose I want to take Spot along?"

"Well, of course you have got to have a helper. All the agents do, and my wagons have an extra seat behind for them."

"All right. If I can get Spot to go with me, I'll try at once. Where will you send me first?"

"I'll give you a trip of northern Connecticut, ten miles wide from the Massachusetts line, and running the whole length of the State."

"That'll please me, I guess. When shall I start?"

"Just as soon as you like."

And so it was arranged between them, and Sam Spry, the New York drummer, resolved to try his luck as a lightning-rod peddler.

ing lightning-rod agents, and he felt sure of having loads of fun in the business himself.

The rods were very easily put up, and after having learned the business and being well supplied with the most approved apparatus, he concluded he could work the racket, and Spot had so much faith in him that he was willing to bet that he could do it right the first time.

The team was indeed a spanking one, and the new, showy wagon, with "Smith's Patent Infallible Lightning-rod," painted in the most fantastic shape, with a thunder-storm for a background, attracted attention wherever it went, much to the delight of Spot on his elevated seat.

Sam drove about twenty miles that day, and forty-five the next, the roads being good and the weather delightful.

"Well, Spot, how are you feeling to-day?"



"Well, you are a nice-looking sample to take back to New York, are you not? Don't you think the bosses will be proud of you?"

petite for dinner, seized his hat, and rushed frantically from the house, to dine afterward at his club.

Even there Spud had spread the story, and he found himself an object of laughter and merciless quizzing on all sides among his friends and acquaintances.

But let us return to Sam Spry.

Of course he had little or no difficulty in meeting Annie Jub, although under the circumstances it was much more embarrassing than it had ever been before, now that he had been discharged by her father on account of paying attention to her.

But she was a bright, level-headed girl, and after expressing her indignation at her father's conduct, she had little trouble in the way of making herself even more attractive to him than ever before, although their blushing told that they understood they were no longer girl and boy acquaintances.

And Sam, during the time he was loafing and looking about the city, came across an old acquaintance who was doing a rushing business in the lightning-rod trade, sending out agents to different parts of the country who were making big money putting up his patent infallible rod.

Sam Spry was just the man he wanted, and he took pains to show him how much his other agents were making, and finally offered to furnish him with a first-class wagon and span of horses, together with a good stock, if he would only take hold of it.

"There's money and heaps of fun in it, Sam," said the proprietor, whose name was Smith. "Never mind if you don't know to put them up; I can show you in half an hour, so you can astonish the natives wherever you go. What do you say?"

Spot was delighted with the notion, and left Jub & Spud at once to go with Sam.

Besides, there was a lofty seat behind, on which he was to ride, and there he could show off the stunning new suit of clothes that Sam had provided for him.

Four days afterward everything was ready, and both Sam and Spot were delighted with the whole turnout, it being new, commodious, and the horses a spanking span of showy grays, who could show their heels to almost anything he would be likely to encounter on the road.

Well, everything being ready, Sam took leave of his new employer, and started the team down Broadway, Spot perched up on his seat behind with folded arms, big as a lord, and attracting ten times as much notice.

Sam drove directly to Jub & Spud's store, where the salesmen and others came out to see him.

"Where are you going, Sam?" asked Mr. Spud.

"Going to try my hand at being a lightning-rod peddler," said Sam.

"Good! Success to you!" and amid the cheers of his friends he whipped up his team, and started out for new experiences on the road.

CHAPTER XVII.

To tell the truth, Sam Spry was delighted at the change of business, for it would give him a pleasant outing through a beautiful country, and be a rest from the business he had been so long in.

He had read a great many amusing things regard-

"Fine, Sam, an' very high," replied Spot.

"Mind you don't fall from your high seat, for I can't make a hears of this very well."

"Oh, my! oh, no!"

That night they arrived at Canian, Conn., where they were to commence operations going east, not far from the boundary line of Massachusetts, intending to return nearer the middle of the State going west.

"Am dis yer Canian?" asked Spot.

"Yes, Spot, this is the happy land of Canian. I knew we should reach it some time."

Then Spot began to sing one of the good old Methodist tunes he had learned in his boyhood, ending with the chorus:

"Oh, Canian, bright Canian.

I's bound for de lan of Canian;

Oh Canian, I am my happy, happy home,

I's bound for de lan ob Canian."

"Well, never mind, we have got there now, and you want to stop that singing, or they will never take us in."

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" and he shut pan.

It was now nearly sunset, and the beautiful town of Canian was all astir and ready to be surprised by Sam and his turnout as it thundered into the main street and made directly for the tavern.

Such an advent, of course, in a little town creates quite a stir, and it only takes a few minutes for nearly everything connected with the strangers and their business to become known. And so it was with Sam Spry.

Going at a brisk trot, he swept up in front of the

tavern with a flourish, Spot leaping down to take charge of the horses in company with the hostler, while Sam leaped upon the piazza where the landlord stood waiting for him.

"Accommo here for a week or so?" he asked.

"Oh, certainly, certainly. Glad to see you," and he led the way into the office, where the dirty register was opened and a search begun for a pen so that he could put down his name.

"Never mind," said Sam, taking a stylographic pen from his pocket.

With a flourish he wrote:

"SAM SPRY AND SERVANT,

"Northern Connecticut Agents for Smith's Infal-
lible Lightning-rod, the best ever invented. Come
and see me."

"Wal, now'n then," replied the man, carelessly.

"Any material accidents?"

"Wal, sometimes things get struck, if that's what
you mean."

"That is it exactly. But I have brought the great
preventive, and those who adopt it will never be in
further danger from the shafts of the Olympian
Jove."

"Hey?" asked the old Yank, stopping his whittling
and looking at him in surprise.

"They will be in no further danger of being struck
by lightning," said Sam, in plain English.

"Oh, kersactly. I didn't know but yu was torkin'
'bout somethin' else. But say, how is yure lightnin'-
rods for sheep and critters?" he asked.

"Sheep and critters?" asked Sam, astonished.

"Yes. I've had heaps o' critters struck by light-

And so he chaffed and talked, making himself well
liked, and, finally, to cap the climax, he treated them
to all the able-bodied cider they could drink, making
himself so popular that he might have run success-
fully for town overseer.

And while Sam was entertaining those on the front
piazza, Spot had the servants about the place spell-
bound by the narration of his wild exploits and hair-
breadth escapes in life. Indeed, it is doubtful if Othello
ever worked up a better romance than he did.

Well, before Sam retired that night, he had arranged
with the landlord to cover his buildings with rods, for
which he was to pay in board, his idea being to make
an advertising card of the job, and at the same time
have a chance for himself and Spot to practice in put-
ting up the rods, for as yet he had never tried his hand
at the practical part of the business, although he un-



Well, everything being ready, Sam took leave of his new employer, and started the team down Broadway, Spot
perched up on his seat behind with folded arms, big as a lord, and attracting ten times as much notice.

The landlord opened his eyes when he read the en-
try on his book.

It told the whole story, and there were no questions
to ask.

"Give me the best room you have in the house, and
a comfortable one for my man."

"Yes, sir, certainly. Show you right up," said the
delighted landlord.

"And supper?"

"Be ready in about half an hour."

"Good enough."

And so Sam was installed, and everything appeared
to be lovely.

But Spot attracted more attention than Sam did,
for his position being more exalted than it had previ-
ously been, he felt himself to be of so much greater
importance, and put on airs in connection with his
extraordinary suit of clothes, causing him to be the
observed of all observers.

He had thoroughly astonished the Irish hostler be-
fore the team had been well bestowed, and it was a
question with him whether he was the boss and own-
er of the establishment or not.

After supper Sam sat on the piazza and smoked a
genuinely good cigar, the flavor of which astonished
the natives who lingered about, as natives do linger
about every village tavern to hear or discuss the
news or add a little something to the current gossip,
and of course Sam was there to take it all in or to
add to it whenever he got a chance.

"Have many thunder-storms in this part of the
State?" he asked of a tough-looking old Yank who
sat near him, whittling a stick.

nin', and if I could only find somethin' as whar a
preventive, I'd buy."

"Well, all you want is one or more of our infallible
lightning-rods on your barn and outbuildings to be
rendered perfectly secure."

"Oh, gosh darn it! the lightnin' never troubles 'em
when they're in the barns, but it's when they're out
to pasture."

"How does it happen?"

"Wal, when a shower comes up they get under the
trees for shelter, an' generally get struck."

"Ah, my dear sir, all that is required is a lightning-
rod on each of the trees in your pasture, and there
you are," said Sam, briskly.

"How?"

"Why, save your mutton. See?"

"Gosh!" exclaimed the Yank.

"No singed wool or sheep skins full of holes from
lightning. See?"

"B'gosh, I guess yu're right, young man. I never
thought of that afore. Guess I'll have yu put up some
rods on my trees," said he.

"I'm that kind of a cat, mister, and before I leave
this town I am going to have our rods on every house
and barn that's worth saving, and to commence with
I am going to put them on the tavern so people can
see them."

"Goin' to have a thunder-storm so people can see
how they work?" asked one of the many loungers who
stood around.

"Yes, I stand in with the weather clerk and shall
have a first-class electric-light fireworks exhibition at
the conclusion of my work."

derstood the theory well enough, and he didn't want
people to know how green he was.

So the next morning, soon after breakfast, he and
Spot began to adorn that tavern with lightning-rods,
from peak to the ground.

Sam was naturally ingenious, and in a very short
time he had the knack of putting them up right at his
fingers' end, and Spot was a good second at the busi-
ness.

Before noon they had the tavern finished, and then
went for the big barn, intending to run a line of rod
from the cupola to the ground as a protection for that
portion of the estate.

Spot had on a pair of rubbers, and was very proud
of the way he could walk on the inclined roofs of the
buildings with their assistance. Indeed, he even be-
came hilarious, and run around much more than
there was any necessity of doing for the purpose of
showing off.

There was a cupola on the barn about ten feet high
above the ridge-pole, more for ornament than for use,
with blinds on each side, or, rather, on three sides, that
on the backside having been broken in or out.

And Sam understood, of course, that the lightning-
rod must start with a point several feet above that and
run to the moist earth in order to be effective.

Oh, Sam had the theory of the thing down as fine as
flour, and he was rapidly catching on to the practical
as well.

They raised the long ladder to the eaves, and Spot
started up with a shorter one to be used in reaching the
cupola.

"Oh, I guess not!" said he, exultantly, as he reach-

ed the roof and ran up it nimbly, with the short ladder on his shoulder. "Maybe I's no lightnin' calker-lator. Oh, my—oh, no!"

"Look out how you caper around up there, Spot, or the first thing you know you will be on some other spot not quite so elevated," called Sam, from below.

"Dat yer am all right, Sam; I ken walk up heah jus' like I could on de fioo!" he answered, carelessly, and then he set the ladder up against the cupola.

Then he began to climb up, with a section of rod in his hand, singing:

"What am dem shoes dat I do wear—
Oh, my! oh, yes!
Dey am fo' to climb de golden stair—
Oh, my! oh, yes!
What am—"

At this point he suddenly stopped.

What he saw at that moment so startled him that it not only knocked the vocalism out of him, but took the kinks out of his wool so suddenly that the effect knocked his hat off.

He gave one yell and fell down, clinging to the ridge-pole for dear life.

Sam Spry was equally astonished, although he managed to keep his feet.

The trouble was, the landlord had a pair of tame eagles up in that cupola, and just at that time they had young.

So when Spot began knocking about theirerie they sailed out to see what the row was, and this was what overwhelmed him.

They were enormous birds, and as they flew around the prostrate coon, screaming and striking him with their wings, poor Spot thought his last hour had arrived.

"Murder! Help!" he cried, faintly, and Sam, not knowing what the dickens to do under the circumstances, yelled for the landlord.

The landlord ran out and with him half a dozen others.

He saw the trouble at a glance.

"Hello! I forgot to tell you about the eagles," said he, looking up at them as they were sailing around the terrified ducky, screaming wildly, and now and then banging him with their terrible wings.

"But they will kill that poor coon," said Sam, excitedly. "What shall be done?"

"Hang me if I know, unless he rolls off and gets out of their way," replied the landlord.

"And that would kill him. Haven't you any control of them?"

"No more than you have."

"Well, then, we must shoot them."

"Not much! I wouldn't take five hundred dollars for those birds. Shoot your nigger."

"Not much," replied Sam, drawing his navy revolver, with which he was a good shot.

"Help, help! took 'em away!" cried Spot, who still clung to the ridge-pole, face downward, and kicking wildly with his feet.

"Hold on!" cried the landlord, seizing Sam's arm to stay his shooting.

"But this will never do."

Just then another yell from Spot and a cry from those watching him attracted their attention and they looked up.

Those indignant eagles had pounced upon the unfortunate coon, one seizing him by the coat collar and the other by the slack of his trousers, and began to tug away at him.

It took the landlord and another man to restrain Sam Spry from blazing away at those emblems of freedom.

Everybody yelled, Spot the loudest.

But those birds of freedom were putting in their fine work on poor Spot, you bet.

Spreading their huge wings when they each of them had a good hold on their victim, they lifted him bodily, although he was yelling loud enough to frighten them, and sailed away with him.

But he proved too heavy for a long journey, and slowly all three settled down into the bar-yard, where they suddenly dropped him, and then sailed away to the cupola, where they perched, screaming and shaking their wings in triumph.

A rush was made, and poor Spot pulled from the unsavory heap into which he had been dropped.

Seeing that he was unhurt, Sam put up his revolver and laughed heartily.

But a sicker looking coon than Spot was never belovied in terror or struggle to catch his breath.

"Are you hurt?" asked several, but he hadn't wind enough to reply.

They threw a bucket of water into his face, and this not only washed, but revived him somewhat.

But it didn't make him look much handsomer.

"How is it with you, Spot?" asked Sam.

"Who—who—whar de angels?" he asked, looking wildly around.

"What angels?"

"Dem dat grabbed me."

This made everybody laugh, for it was plain to be seen that he had never seen an eagle before, but had seen pictures of angels with huge wings, and supposed these to be a pair of them.

"There they are, up there," said Sam, pointing to the cupola.

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! Les go, Sam," said he, edging away.

"Oh, you are all right," said the landlord.

"Yes, and got out of the scrape darned well," added a bystander.

"But dem angels—"

"Those are eagles, Spot," said Sam.

"Eagles! Burds?"

"Yes."

"Wal, I don't want no mo' game ob dat kind in

mine," said he, sadly, at the same time trying to divest himself of the coating that clung to him.

"They would never have molested you only they have young ones," the landlord tried to explain to Sam.

"Well, I don't propose to wait here in the happy land of Canian for those young ones to make their debut, so your barn will have to go without a lightning-rod, that's all."

"All right. She's stood it for thirty years, and I guess she'll get along a while longer," replied the landlord, and they retired to the office, after which Spot sought the wash-room.

It had been a decidedly sensational affair from the start, but now that it was over and no great harm done, all hands felt like laughing, that is to say, everybody but Spot.

He had been frightened out of a year's growth and nearly ruined his good clothes, and, of course, he felt little like laughing.

But he finally returned to the bar-room, where Sam was treating everybody to cider, and he looked a trifle more presentable.

"Have some cider, Spot?" said Sam, an invitation he never declined.

"How are you feeling now?" asked the landlord.

"Feel! I feels like goin' home," said he.

"Why, what is the matter with you, Spot?"

"Matter! Dar's allus somefin' de matter," said he, disgustedly. "No mo' lightnin'-rods fo' me."

"What do you expect to find eagles at every place you go?"

"Nebber mine de yeagles, Sam. You know how it am allus," said he, sadly.

"How is it?"

"Dar am somefin' happenin' me ebbery time, an' I's gettin' discouraged. It makes me homesick," and he sat down dejectedly.

"Oh, pshaw! that was only an accident that might not occur again in a million times."

"Well, Sam, maybe dat am so, but when dat millionth time comes round, I shall be shuah to be dar all de same."

"Nonsense! Brace up and have some style about you," said Sam, after the laugh subsided.

"Sam, I's homesick."

"Oh, I'll knock that out of you. Brace up."

But Spot was a saddened coon.

And yet the reader who has been with him since he set out with Sam Spry, and is knowing to all that has happened to him, can scarcely blame him for being homesick, or for believing that luck was against him every time.

So Sam left him alone during the remainder of the day, and spent his time in explaining his lightning-rod to people who came to inquire about it, and here he was perfectly at home, so much so that he took orders for as many as eight houses to be furnished with the rods.

"I don't b'lieve nothin' in ther darned things, no-how," said one old fellow in a group who stood around Sam.

"Wal, I don't pretend to understand nuthin' 'bout how they work," said another.

"What! And this in famous New England?" exclaimed Sam. "The air is a non-conductor in which the clouds which develop the lightning float. The clouds are positive and the earth negative. Electricity always seeks to go from the positive to the negative, but in passing through this bad conductor it becomes intensified, so to speak, and seeks the nearest road to the earth and the best conductors. Houses and trees are only little better conductors than the air, but the fluid seeks them in preference. Hence, the fatal stroke, the combustion that follows. But if a good conductor like this interposes, the lightning is as sure to take it as water is to run down hill, and ther, meeting no resistance, is conducted to the earth without harm, it being harmless and invisible on a good conductor, as was discovered and established by the immortal Ben Franklin."

"But what makes the thunder?" asked another.

"Lightning travels at the velocity of two hundred and eighty-eight thousand miles a second, and it is the rushing of the electric spark through the non-conducting air that causes the thunder, which in itself is as harmless as the report of a gun is, compared with the effect of its charge."

"Wal, yer tork well, young feller, but we don't swaller all we hear," said the donbting Yank, and the others seemed inclined to side with him.

"Gentlemen," said the schoolmaster, who had been a listener, "this young man is right, and has given you the correct philosophy of thunder and lightning. And he is right in regards to lightning-rods," he added.

This turned the tide in Sam's favor, and no more doubt was expressed, for if the schoolmaster said so, that settled it for all time, and the result was that the orders poured in upon him from all sides.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SAM SPRY seemed to have struck oil in Canian, for the fame of his learning, after the schoolmaster had publicly indorsed him, and the persuasiveness of his style brought all the orders he could fill. Indeed, he was obliged to hire a man to assist in putting up the lightning-rods that he sold.

As for Spot, he slowly recovered after his unhappy adventure with the two eagles, and was once more inclined to follow the fortunes of his young boss. In fact, in less than three days he regained nearly all of his original enthusiasm and was ready for business once more.

And yet he was not entirely happy.

The idea was firmly impressed upon his mind that if there was anything to happen that it would surely happen to him.

No matter who might be in his company, he was marked by fate for all the accidents and rough things that were destined to happen.

True, he had an abiding faith in Sam Spry, and was ready to follow and serve him almost anywhere, but for a change, just for the fun of the thing, he would have liked to see the fancy outh get some of his luck.

It would have given him him courage and resignation to meet the larger number of the usual accidents attending a life on the road could he have seen Sam get now and then a slice of the bad luck.

For instance, if Sam had gone up on that barn and been fooled with by those eagles, instead of himself, he would have been reconciled and ready to take the next two or three crooked happenings and said nothing about it.

But, as before stated, he gradually forgot his growl with fate, and settled right down to business, working like a colored Trojan in putting up the lightning-rods. And he worked all the harder because, after a while, Sam allowed him to boss the jobs while he attended to getting orders.

There never had been a lightning-rod in the neighborhood until Sam went there, and in a short time everybody wanted them.

But of course he had to meet many curious people, to whom he had to explain the philosophy of the thing over and over again. And even then they appeared to get the idea that the rods were put up to sap the atmosphere, to draw off the surplus lightning, and thus prevent thunder-storms.

"It's agin nature," said one old fellow to him, after he had explained the philosophy of the rods.

"Why is it agin nature?" asked Sam.

"Wal, didn't the Lord make thunder and lightnin'?"

"He probably made the conditions from which the phenomenon arises."

"Fe—what? You mean thunder, I s'pose," the old fellow retorted, sharply, for he was leath to admit that anybody knew more than he did, even if they could use bigger words.

"Exactly; but why is it agin nature?"

"Because everything in nature was pronounced good, an' we poor human critters have no busines to try to alter or improve anything. If thunder 'n lightnin' war made to come, let 'em come—that's my doctrine."

"Well, how about boils?" asked Sam.

"Biles! What's biles got to do with it?"

"Perhaps nothing, only as an illustration."

"How?"

"Boils are made to come; that is, they result from an impure state of the blood; but because they come is it any reason why we should not purify the blood and prevent their coming?"

"Wal," said the old fellow, scratching his head, "I don't see what biles has got to do with thunder an' lightnin' rods."

"They have nothing to do with them, as I said before, but if it is right to purify the blood in order to prevent them, it certainly is right to resort to measures to rob the atmosphere of its terrors and render harmless what would otherwise be dangerous and objectionable."

"Wal, maybe you're right," mused he. "Say, I guess you'd make a darnation good talker for a camp-meeting or a lecture," he added.

"Well, perhaps so. But I am dead in earnest and dead right. Now let me put up a set of rods on your house."

"Oh, git out!" said he, depreciatingly.

"But supposing there should come up a big thunder storm and everybody else in town was protected against it, how would you feel?"

"About what?"

"Why, to think that the whole force of the storm would be concentrated on you because the lightning would have no show on the property of others, and you and the trees would have to take it all. Think of that."

"Wal, b-gosh, that alters matters a little," said he, thoughtfully.

"Of course it does."

"But, say, if you hadn't come here at all an' put up you're pesky rods, I should have had just as good a show as I ever had, an' been able to take my chances with others."

"Well, perhaps."

"Then du you think it's sarvin' me just right to put me in such a hole?"

"Oh, you look at it in an altogether selfish light. The greatest good of the greatest number is what we should all go in for. But in this protecting the majority I had no intention of directing the electric shafts at you, because I supposed, of course, that you would do as they have done and are doing. Once I get all of the buildings in Canian fitted with this remarkable lightning-rod, thunder-storms will become discouraged and skip right over the town and look for unprotected property."

"Think so?"

"I'm positive of it, my dear sir."

"How much will it cost me?"

"Well, it would be forty dollars, provided you had faith; but I want to convert you, so that you will talk up the rod. So I will put them up in good shape, and warrant them proof against the fiercest thunderbolts that leap from the clouds for thirty dollars, although I hope you will not mention the fact."

"Oh, I won't; I allus get things just as cheap as I can."

"Which is perfectly right, my dear sir."

"Wal, go ahead an' put 'em up."

"All right, sir. I'll have them up to-morrow," said Sam, writing the name and address in his memorandum book.

Then he drove away with the proud satisfaction of having chinned the old fellow into paying just five

dollars more than he would have charged him without the chin music.

And so he went from house to house, and had so much to say in his own peculiar way that he soon had the whole town of Canian talking of nothing but lightning-rods and the wonders they would perform.

The next house he called at was one owned by a maiden lady of uncertain age, and reported to be wealthy.

She conducted her own business affairs, and was generally regarded as a man hater. Indeed, he had been told about her by several persons who were ready to bet that he could not sell her a set of lightning-rods.

The landlord was one of these persons, and Sam just made a quiet little bet of five dollars with him that he could sell her.

part of your beautiful State, and have met with great success in Canian."

"Where do you live?"

"In New York."

"Why, that's a horribly bad place, I hear."

"Yes, for a person that isn't smart; but it is the Empire City of the country in all that is great, business-like and booming. Now will you allow me to put up the rods on your house?"

"Well, I don't know. How much will it cost?" she asked, smiling.

"Let me see. Well, I will protect you for twenty-five dollars. Think how small a sum that is for absolute protection."

"Well, yes. Are you married?" she asked, at the same time blushing like a red cabbage.

"Here's a mash," thought Sam. "Oh, no, my dear

"Certainly, with pleasure. But you will excuse me one moment, I trust."

"Of course."

"My motto is 'Business before pleasure,' and as the putting up of lightning-rods on your house and barn is business, let us settle that first, after which the pleasure of your society will be all the more beautiful. The rods?"

"Oh, yes, put them up by all means," said she, by this time really interested.

"Thanks. I will just fill out this blank for you to sign, so that I can show it to my employers, after which I am yours truly, Sam Spry."

"Why, what a real lively man you are," she replied, signing the filled out order which bound her to pay for the lightning-rods.

"For that matter, we have to be in order to hold our own."



"Help, help! took 'em away!" cried Spot, who still clung to the ridge-pole, face downward, and kicking wildly with his feet.

So he was all prepared when he drove up to her front door with his showy team.

Her name was Miss Higgins, and she came right to the front door to see what was wanted.

"Ah, good-morning, Miss Higgins. I see you have no lightning-rods on your beautiful residence," said the handsome youth, leaping from his seat and lifting his hat to her politely.

There is no knowing what the maiden would have said had he not been the handsomest young fellow she ever set her eyes upon, but she looked at him and stammered without really speaking.

"I am putting a very superior article on the houses of nearly every one of your neighbors, and I thought I would call and see if you did not also wish to protect yourself."

"Why, dear me, do you really think there is any danger?" she asked, smiling, and pursing up her mouth in a comical way that was intended to be perfectly captivating.

"There is always danger during the season of thunder and lightning, my dear lady. Why, the papers are full of accounts of the havoc caused by this terrible devastator, and science has at length devised a means whereby its terrors can be disarmed and banished."

"You don't tell me!"

"It is a fact, I assure you. A building that is provided with Smith's patent infallible lightning-rods is in no danger of the dreaded destroyer of life and property."

"Did you make them?" she asked, as though she thought him smart enough to make anything.

"No, my dear lady. I am simply the agent for this

lady; I have never had time to even think of such a thing as that."

"But I suppose you are courting somebody?"

"I think not. I haven't time."

"That's too bad," she mused.

"Besides, the girls don't want anything to do with a fellow who hasn't anything but his wits to depend upon, and so, if I ever do such a thing, I shall wait until I have accumulated some money. The girls love money, and they don't want anything to do with a man who hasn't any."

"What real horrid creatures they must be," said she, with some show of indignation.

"Oh, it is the way of the world, you know."

"No, it cannot be. At all events, I would not be like them."

"I am glad to know that there is one real nice lady in the world."

Sam was beginning to get in his sugar frosted-cake work, don't you see?

"I am rich," said she, coyly.

"I am glad to hear it. I wish every good person in the world was rich."

"Yes, folks say I am rich; but I wouldn't be so cruel to anybody I liked."

"I should hope not."

"I think you are real nice, and if you should ask me to marry you, I shouldn't stop to ask how much money you had," and she laughed real cunning.

"Oh, but they are not all so kind as you are," said Sam, boldly taking her hand in his.

"Oh, don't!" she cried.

"I beg pardon," and he released her hand.

"Yes, you may—that is, won't you walk in?"

"I suppose so. But don't you ever get tired?"

"Oh, very often."

"Walk right in," she said, leading the way into her best room. "And don't you sometimes wish you had a home where you were master, and with a fortune all at your command?" she asked again, as she led the way into her parlor.

"Indeed, I do," sighed Sam, taking a seat on the sofa.

"And would you marry a woman who would assure you all this?" she asked, taking a seat by his side and slyly reaching for his hand.

"Yes, I most assuredly would."

"Oh, Samuel!" and she leaned her head upon his shoulder and sighed a real sigh.

The old gal was completely mashed.

"I—I beg pardon," said Sam, hesitatingly.

"My name is Percilla Higgins. If anybody liked me well enough to marry me they would not have to work any more, and I would make them exceedingly happy," and she sighed some more.

This was a trifle more of a mash than Sam had calculated on. He didn't mind working in a little taffy until he got her order for lightning-rods, but he did not expect to have matters go to this extent.

And yet he hardly knew how to get out of it. It was a bigger game than he had ever taken a hand in before. But he was not the lad to take water. So he braced up.

"I—I haven't the slightest doubt but that the man who marries you will be a happy one for life, and it surprises me that some one has not secured the prize before this."

"Oh, Samuel, the right one for me to make happy

never came along till now," said she, squeezing his hand and looking up into his eyes as sweet as home-made molasses candy.

"Excuse me, Percilla, but I hardly catch the drift of your remarks."

"Oh, Samuel, I have never loved till now."

"Is it possible?"

"It is true. Oh, Samuel, excuse my maiden blushes, but it is true."

"What is?" he asked, encircling her waist with his arm, just to see what she would do.

"Oh, that I love you, Samuel. Say that you will be mine, and we will be—oh, so happy. You can give up this business and we will go together over the whole earth and never a care shall cause us pain. Say it, Samuel!"

Sam was sorry then that he had put his arm around her all too yielding waist, and he would have given up the five dollars he had won from the landlord if he could have got out of it in any respectable way.

He wished to Heaven that something would happen; that somebody would start an alarm of fire; that his team would run away, or that there might be a dog fight outside.

"I—I am not worthy of so great a love," he finally managed to say.

"Oh, yes, you are, I know you are. Dozens have tried to win me for my wealth, but I saw through them all and would have nothing to do with them. I was determined to keep my wealth until I found some one worthy of sharing it with me. That one I have found in you, Samuel—let me say my Samuel."

"But you do not know me. We do not know each other yet. I may be far from what you could love when you know all about me," he mildly protested.

"Oh, my heart tells me that you are just what you appear to be, my ideal; the man I have long been waiting for."

Sam glanced at her and concluded that she must have begun waiting for her ideal some time before he was born.

"But it was so sudden."

"And so sweet!" she answered promptly, at the same time putting up her puckered mouth for him to kiss if he took the hint.

But he didn't, or, if he did, he didn't do it.

"But it would be better to wait awhile until we know each other better."

"Oh, cruel boy! I ask no time. I will go with you even now to the parson's and have him unite us in the sweet and holy bonds of wedlock," said she, flinging her arms around his neck.

There was a situation!

"You are too kind, Percilla."

"And you too cruel."

"Indeed, I would not be."

"Then say you favor my proposition."

"Oh, I certainly do," said Sam, thinking he saw a way out of the unexpected snap.

"Then you are not indifferent to me?"

"By no means."

"And you will give me an answer before long? Before you go away?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then we are engaged on conditions?"

"Yes, certainly."

He couldn't think of anything else to say.

"Well, then, kiss me, Samuel," said she, pursing up her mouth to hide her false teeth.

Great snakes!

It was tough, but Sam, after hesitating a moment, concluded he could stand it, so long as it was the only way out of it, and so he closed his eyes tightly and kissed her.

She nearly swooned, and Sam leaped up, pretending to think she was ill.

But she speedily recovered.

Sam took up his hat.

"Excuse me now, please, for this is so new to me that I—well, I will see you again. I will send my men to put up the rods to-morrow."

"And be sure and come yourself, Samuel—dear Samuel," said she, following him to the door.

"If I can get away from business, yes."

"But you must come; you must not neglect me now, after capturing my waiting heart."

"Oh, certainly not. I will come again soon," said he, leaping up on his wagon seat.

"Good-bye, Samuel," and she kissed her hand to him as he drove away.

"Good-bye, Percilla."

"Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye!" he heard above the rattle of his wagon.

That adventure took the cake; but as it was by this time nearly sunset, he drove back to the tavern for the purpose of taking the landlord's five dollars by showing him Miss Higgins' order.

But he said nothing about the other part of his adventure with the susceptible old maiden, for he didn't want the laugh on him if he could help it.

The next day, however, he sent Spot and the hired man to put up the rods on Miss Higgins' house, telling them to take pains with the job and make it a good one.

They did so, although she followed them everywhere, all the while asking Spot questions about Sam, which he answered with his usual amount of taffy.

The next day Sam sent Spot up to collect the bill, and also gave him the following letter to give to her:

"FRIEND PERCILLA.—Of course I do not wish to mix business with pleasure, so have entrusted my man to give you this after he has presented the bill for the lightning-rods, which I must forward to New York to-night. To-morrow will be Sunday. May I visit you in the evening and tell you my conclusion?"

"SAM SPRY."

Of course that settled the business, and the bill was not only paid with promptness, but Spot received the

present of a dollar, and a hint that greater things were in store for him.

In answer to his letter she wrote him a full-page gusher. "Yes, yes, yes" was written all over it, but she concluded as follows:

"Oh, come to me, darling, my darling! My heart is hungry for you. I will wait you at twilight in the front arbor. Steal in on me, darling, my darling, and call me your darling there in the gloaming."

"PERCILLA."

"Well, this is the worst I ever saw," mused Sam, as he read the effusion. "I'll post Spot, and let him meet her in the arbor gloaming, and if the gloaming isn't dim enough to suit her, he'll add a few shades to it by his blackness. Monday I am off, so it does not amount to much how the meeting turns out in her arbor."

Nobody but Sam Spry would have thought of such a snap as that, and nobody but Spot would have believed that there was anything but fun in it.

So during Sunday he received his instructions, and then awaited the twilight hour with a big grin on his mug.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE shades of Sunday night were falling fast on the town of Canaan, Connecticut, when Spot set out for the house of Miss Percilla Higgins, in the place of Sam Spry, whom she had so gushingly invited to meet her in the gloaming of her arbor.

Spot was in ecstasies.

He was pleased with the idea of having some fun with the old girl who had asked him so many questions about Sam, and bothered him about his work, and so it was but natural that he set out with a swagger and an elastic step.

"By golly, dis yer am de greatis racket I eber had," he mused, in anticipation.

And Percilla was there, waiting for her lover, true as Hero to Lysander, although she had no beacon to guide him to her arms, for light was just what she didn't want.

"No," she murmured, as she awaited his coming, "we want no light; we shall meet and love in the perfumed darkness. The smiling moon shall not peep through this leafy veil to see our loves, and the envious stars shall twinkle without seeing us. Oh, hasten to me, lover, hasten. The twilight fades in the gloaming, and one after another is Night lighting her candles in the sky. Come to me, lover, come! Oh, how handsome you are, so come to love's bower, where fond arms are waiting to enfold you and hungry lips to kiss away your tears. Oh, come—oh, come!"

Spot was there.

He overheard her rapturous soliloquy, and said "Ahem!" just outside the arbor.

"Ahem!" from the arbor.

"Ahem!" from Spot again.

"Come, timid sweetheart, come."

"Ahem!" and Spot edged his way very bashfully into the dark arbor.

"Oh, Samuel, you have come! Welcome—a thousand welcomes from one who loves you!" said she, springing up and throwing her arms fondly around him.

Spot was never regarded as a bashful coon, and now that the darkness favored him, he was not long in returning her embrace.

And when she puckered up her mouth, and held it out to be kissed, he concluded he was just as white as anybody there in the dark, and so he smacked her.

"Again!" she cried, and Spot was right on hand for the encore.

"Oh, darling, how I have longed for you since last we met! Life has put on a new garb since we met! I have sat here for an hour, waiting for the witching time between twilight and dark, trying to still my fluttering heart, and telling it that you, its king, would soon be here. Come, sit down. Are you well?" she asked, anxiously, as she fairly pulled him to a seat beside her.

"Oh, yes, quite well," replied Spot, doing his best to imitate Sam's voice.

"I am so glad! May you always be so! How cool and delightful is the evening air!"

"Very, very nice!"

Spot was trying to collect his thoughts.

He had gab and blarney enough, if he could only get it started right. But he had to be very careful in speaking, for fear of using some of the quaint phrases so natural to him.

"Oh, Samuel, don't be so coy," said she.

"I—I am't coy," murmured Spot.

"Hold me in your arms, Samuel."

"All right," and he pulled her closer to him with strength enough to nearly break her in two.

She sighed, but it would be hard to say whether it was from excess of emotion, or because of the coon's vigorous hug.

"Oh, Samuel!"

"Oh, Miss Higgins!"

"Call me Percilla."

"Percilla!"

"Or some pet name that you like better. Call me a pet name, Samuel," she said, and oh, so pleadingly.

"What shall it be?"

"Whatever pleases you, dearest."

"Shall I call you Sweetness?"

"Yes, if you think it appropriate. But am I really sweet in your eyes?"

"Yes, but sweeter in my mouf," he said, alighty forgetting his accentuation.

"Oh, Samuel!" and she clung still closer.

"Call me a pet name, Sweetness," said Spot, just beginning to be himself, and he made one big foot kick the other, so tickled was he.

"Yes, I have a name for you."

"What is it, pray?"

"One that springs from my inmost being."

"Tell me."

"It is Darling."

"Oh, how nice. But am I your darling?"

"Oh, yes, my own heart's darling," and she would have asked him to squeeze her again if she hadn't been afraid he would break her ribs or corset steels.

"Yum, yum, yum!"

"What is that, Darling?"

"It is Spanish, Sweetness."

"Oh, well, darling, American sweetness is good enough for me."

"Me, too," and he nearly knocked out her false teeth in reaching for some of it.

As it was, a certain quantity of false hair got badly disarranged.

"Samuel! oh, Samuel!"

"Yes, Sweetness."

"Have you considered?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes."

He was getting a trifle too excited to retain the grip on his imitation of Sam's style.

"And will you—oh, speak my fate?"

"Oh, I will!"

"You will marry me?" she asked, eagerly.

"Yes, Sweetness."

"Oh, joy! Oh, Heaven be praised for that one word—that one word *yes*!" said she, and Spot came in for more sweetmeats.

"You're awful nice," he said in reply, because he didn't know what else to say.

"Not half so nice as you are, precious. But when?"

"When what?"

"Oh, don't pretend you do not know! I am so glad that we are in the dark."

"So be it."

"Or else you would see my blushes."

"And mine, too."

"Oh, Samuel! when will you call me yours?" she asked, passionately.

"Now, Sweetness."

"Oh, joy! but when shall we be married? When will you give up the lightning-rod business and be all mine?"

"Right away. To-night, if you say so."

"Oh, more joy!"

"And you love me, Sweetness?"

"Love you, Samuel? Love is too weak a word. I worship you. You are my king, my heart's ideal and idol. And you?"

"Oh, I's got 'em too," replied Spot, and if she hadn't been so excited at the prospect of getting married she certainly would have noticed the difference between his voice and Sam's.

"You mean you love me?"

"Yes, oh, yes."

"And will marry me right away?"

"The sooner the better, Sweetness."

"Oh, heavenly joy! And we will be so happy!"

"Oh, my, oh, yes!"

"My wealth is all yours, and you shall never be in need to work any more."

"Oh, softness!" murmured Spot, but she evidently didn't know the exact significance of this exclamatory adjective.

"We will go the whole world over in each other's company."

"We'll sail where the maple
O'erreaches its boughs,
Where music's soft ripple
In melody flows.
Where shells of the ocean,
Like bright tinted gems,
Forget life's commotion
On more peaceful bays."

"Oh, how nice!" murmured Spot.

"Dost thou love the picture?"

"Dost I? Oh, softness!" warbled he.

"We'll have no friends that are not lovers,
No ambition save to excel them all in love;
We'll read no books that are not tales of love,
That we may smile to see how poorly the eloquence of words—"

Translates the poetry of hearts like ours!"

"Yum, yum, yum!" Spot warbled once more, at the same time nearly squeezing the breath out of her in his ecstasy.

But she was too deep in poetry to notice that he made use of "Spanish" again.

"And when night comes, beneath the breathless heavens,

We'll guess which star shall be our home
When love becomes immortal,
While the perfumed lights steal through the mists
Of alabaster lamps, and every air
Is heavy with the sighs of orange groves,
And the music of sweet lutes,
And the low murmur of the fountain
That gushes from among the roses."

"Oh, lay, oh, yes!" Spot managed to say, but that Lady of Lyons poetry nearly overcame him.

It broke him all up, because he had never heard so much at a time before in his life.

She had evidently learned it for the occasion.

"And shall we go to the parson to-night?"

"I am all ready, Sweetness."

"Miss Higgins!" called the dairy-maid.

"Hush! it is only the servant to ruthlessly destroy our honeyed tete-a-tete. I will not answer her," said she.

"Miss Higgins!" again called the maid.

"What can she want? But never mind, darling I will not answer her, and soon she will return to the house."

"Maybe something has happened?" suggested Spot,

"Oh, no. She is always worried if I am out of her sight any length of time. Hush!"

"Miss Higgins, where are you?"

And then there was a little piece of silence.

But that troublesome maid of the milking-pail was not inclined to give up the search.

Something had evidently happened in the household, as Spot had suggested.

Finally they saw a light, shaded by a hand, approaching the arbor.

"The troublesome thing! I hope she will not come here," said the lovelorn maiden.

"Oh, my! oh, yes!" murmured Spot.

He didn't want it, either, just then.

"Miss Higgins, Miss Higgins, your speckled cat has fallen into a pan of milk and is drowned!"

And just then she entered the arbor, light in hand.

"Go away!" cried Miss Higgins.

it over the wall, and although he did not get much meat, he managed to return about half of one trouser's leg as a souvenir for his mistress.

But Spot got away, and made the fastest time on record back to the tavern, where he found Sam perched up on the piazza smoking a cigar, and the team standing before the door, all ready for a start.

In fact, Sam had finished all the business he had in Canian, collected all the money due him, and was all ready to set out that night for the next town, it being moonlight and a lighted road before them.

He was at that moment all ready, and only waiting for Spot, although a trifle anxious to learn the result of his adventure.

"Hello, Spot," he said, as that individual presented himself, all out of breath.

"Oh, lord! oh, my!" was all he could say.

"Well, how is it?"

"Yes; a cat got down in a pan of milk, an' de servant come huntin' fo' her wid a lamp. We lay low, but she come right into dat arbor lookin' fo' her, an' de light gib me dead away."

"The dence you say!" exclaimed Sam, becoming interested in the narration.

"Oh, my! oh, yes!"

"Well, what did she do?"

"She jump de track."

"What?"

"Collapse a fine, I guess. Leastwise, she take a look at me, squealed like a sick locomotive, an' flop ober on de seat dead."

"Dead?"

"Well, I dunno."

"In a faint, I guess."

"Yes, maybe so. I tole de servant gal to go fo' some water, an' she went fo' de dog. I went fo' to



"Good-bye, Samuel," and she kissed her hand to him as he drove away. "Good-bye, Percilla." "Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye!" he heard above the rattle of his wagon.

"Shoo!" added Spot.

But it was too late.

The girl had removed her hand from before the lamp, and its fullest light shone brightly upon her mistress, locked in the arms of a coon!

"Gracious me! The lightning-rod man!" she exclaimed, almost involuntarily.

"Yes, and you—"

Probably Miss Higgins was going to tell that impudent domestic that she had better scatter, without stopping for any formalities, when she caught sight of her companion to whom she had been making such love, and knew him at a glance.

Uttering one wild yell of confusion and despair, she fell back upon the seat of the arbor in a dead faint.

"What does this mean?" demanded the astonished milk-maid.

"Go fo' some water," said Spot.

"What have you been doing, you black wretch?"

"Nuffin. She do it all."

"You are a liar and a villain. Here, Bruno, come here!" she called, running from the arbor.

"I don't want no Bruno in mine," said Spot, and he lit out of that without stopping to say good-night, or when he would call again.

But that big Newfoundland was a very fly canine, and quickly responded to the call.

"See him?" Spot heard her cry, as he dashed through the shrubbery of the garden in his mad endeavor to reach the street.

But Bruno was something on a rush also, and by the time Spot had reached the garden wall he had also come within reaching distance.

He reached one of Spot's legs before he could get

"How is it! Look at dat leg," said he, showing his bleeding calf, minus the usual covering.

"Ah, there! Did she nip you?"

"No, but her dog did all the same."

"Oh, you got onto the dog, eh?"

"No, de dog got onto me, by golly."

"What made you let him?"

"I try not to, but the gal she sic him on."

"What gal?"

"De servant gal."

"Well, how was it?"

"It war nip an' tuck, wid nip not quite far enough ober de garden wall."

"Yes, but how did it happen?"

"Oh, yum, yum, yum!" said he, laughing.

"Then you met the old girl?"

"Met her! Oh, by golly, Sam, dat yer am de wuss mash I eber seen."

"Yes, pretty bad, I guess. Well?"

"She war dar in de arbor, an' it war so dark dat she didn't know me from a boot heel. Oh, how she did make lub to me! She call me her Samuel, her darling, an' she hug me 'bout fifty times, an' kiss me an' talk poetry; oh, yum, yum, yum!"

"And she didn't tumble?"

"No, she axed me to marry her right away, an' do no mo' work all my life. Tumble! she wouldn't tumble! She wouldn't do dat little caper if de arbor fall on her. Oh, it war de wuss you eber seen."

"Thought it was me all the while?"

"Ob cose she did. Tumble! she would never tumble in de world if it hadn't been fo' a cat," said he, laughing.

"A cat?"

get out, an' de dog went fo' me. See dat leg?" he asked.

"Yes, it does look as though he went for you, and succeeded in reaching you."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!"

"And, of course, you didn't go back to see what the result was?"

"Golly! I knowed what de result was. How 'bout dat leg?"

"It looks a trifle sore."

"An' how 'bout dem pants?"

"Well, they look a trifle one-sided."

"I should say so. What I do?"

"Oh, you will have to wait until we get to the next town. But I guess it is high time we left this happy land of Canian; so jump up into your seat, and away we go."

"Oh, my! oh, yes!"

"Good-bye, landlord. Good luck to you, but don't ever ask Miss Higgins her opinion of lightning-rod men. Ta, ta!" and the next moment he drew the reins over his horses and they left the place at a lively trot.

Good-bye, Canian; hurrah for the next place!

But seeing our friends on the road and everything serene, suppose we let them go for a while and return to the rich old maid who had been so terribly sold.

Percilla slept the sleep of the faintest away.

Not even the barking and growling of the dog who had so promptly followed Spot and wrenched from him a souvenir of the strange escapade, not even the yells of her milk-maid awoke her for the time being from the oblivion which was mercifully enfolded her.

But that marplot milk-maid, after she had sicked

the dog on to Spot, had rushed to the house and returned with a dish of water.

This she sprinkled over the face of her wilted mistress, all the while wondering what the deuce it all meant, anyhow.

And presently she revived, but she was in a dazed condition and scarcely knew herself or her surroundings.

"Shall I help you into the house?" asked the servant, who had made all the trouble.

"Oh, Samuel! Sweet, sweet Samuel, where are you?" she asked, faintly.

"The old girl is certainly going daft," thought the milk-maid.

"Samuel, Samuel, you are dreadfully tanned," she said again, after a moment's pause.

"Well, I should say he was," muttered the girl.

may become known. Oh, why did I not know enough to beware of a lightning-rod man?"

She sighed herself into hiccoughs, and was finally put to bed weeping for her sad mistake.

CHAPTER XX.

WHILE all this was going on Sam Spry and Spot were on their way out of Canian to the next town, where he had ordered a new lot of lightning-rods to be sent, and where he hoped to do as much business as he had in Canian.

This he hoped; but whether he would have as much fun or not remained to be seen.

But business was what he was after all the time, and if fun came after it, or crept in while it was going on, Sam was not the man to fight against it.

Of course he had to laugh at the way Spot had terminated his courtship of the gushing old maid, Miss

"I know it; but what in thunder is the use of being an early bird if the worm isn't ready for you?"

"Wal, that's so. But this aren't much of a place for arly worms," replied the landlord, with a broad grin.

"Nor early birds, either, I guess," replied Sam.

"Wal, no. We take things purty sort of easy here in Falls Village."

"Well, hurry up, and let us have some grub as soon as possible, for we are hungry as wolves—eh, Spot?"

"Oh, my, oh, yes," he managed to answer between his chattering ivories.

"Whar yer from?" asked the landlord.

"From the happy land of Canian."

"Don't b'long thar, I reckon?"

"No, thank goodness."

"Circus?"

"Oh, yes, we had a circus there," laughed Sam.



"Sic him!" Spot heard her cry, as he dashed through the shrubbery of the garden in his mad endeavors to reach the street. But Bruno was something on a rush also, and by the time Spot had reached the garden wall he had also come within reaching distance. He reached one of Spot's legs before he could get it over the wall.

"Tanned in the original package. Say, are you better now? Shall I help you into the house?"

"Where are you, Samuel?"

"Oh, dear, she has got Samuel on the brain."

"Oh, Samuel! Yes—we will go to the parson at once, and— Oh! ah!"

Then she seemed to arouse from her half unconscious state.

She glanced wildly around.

"What is the matter, Miss Higgins?" asked the servant-girl, taking her hand.

"Matter! Where is—where— Oh, Belinda, what was it?" she suddenly asked, catching her roughly by the shoulders.

"Well, Miss Higgins, I should say that it was a negro—the same one that put up the lightning-rods the other day. Did you know it?"

"Oh, Belinda, this is dreadful."

"I should say it was."

"I thought it was Mr. Spry."

"Well, he got out mighty Spry when I set the dog on him."

"Oh, what a disgrace!"

"I guess you are right, that is, if it once became known. Here, Bruno," she added, as the dog returned with a leg of Spot's trousers in his mouth.

"There is a relic of him, miss."

"Oh, Belinda, never mention it, or I am ruined forever. Go away, Bruno," she added, as the dog leaped upon her lap, and presented her with the trouser's leg, while his tail wagged delightedly.

"Come to the house—please."

"Belinda, I shall leave town for awhile, for fear this

Higgins, and Spot forgot his gnawed shin and amputated trousers' leg while relating his experience.

The night was beautiful and the way so well defined that it was even a greater pleasure to go it than it would have been in the daytime.

But it was daylight before they came in sight of Falls Village, a pretty little place, but rather a dead and alive one, as Sam was not long in finding out.

The landlord of the village tavern was almost paralyzed when he saw Sam drive up to his door with a whoop and a flourish, and almost at once took him for the advance agent of a circus, several of whom he had encountered.

In spite of the warmth of the night, both Sam and Spot felt quite chilly from being out in the night air so long.

Spot got down from his seat with considerable trouble, being cold and stiff, and at the same time his teeth chattered like a pair of acstinets, which, together with his torn pants and bleeding leg, made him an object of curiosity, if not of suspicion.

"Put up the horses and feed them well," said Sam to the hostler, who looked as though he had some of yesterday in his eyes yet, and then he turned to the landlord.

"Landlord?"

"Yes."

"Breakfast?"

"Yes."

"How soon?"

"'Bout an hour."

"No sooner?"

"Wal, it's arly yet."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" added Spot, and his effort to grin made him look even more comical than before.

"Goin' ter have one here?"

"I hope so."

"Whose circus is it?"

"Smith's."

"When's it comin'?"

"It is here now."

"What! ther hull show?"

"Yes."

"Horses an' all?"

"Yes. Spot and I are the only performers."

"Wal, b'gosh, I guess it aren't much of a show."

Who's ther clown?"

"Spot here. Eh, Spot?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes! I 'specs so."

"Wal, yu look some like one," said the landlord, sizing him up. "But, say, I never hearn of Smith's Circus," he added.

"My friend, this is a lightning-rod circus."

"Oh, I understand. Peddlin' lightning-rods?"

"Yes, and sellin' them. Don't rub that off your slate. Got none on your house, I see. Sorry for that, for I make it a practice never to put up at a tavern that is not protected by lightning-rods. But I dare say I shall sell you a set before I go."

"Wal, if yu're smarter by a darned sight than I am you may."

"Well, I'll try to be. Travelers would stop here twice as much as they do in summer if you could only protect them against lightning. The fact is, people have become very sensitive about such risks."

"Oh, git out! Never was anything struck by lightning in this neighborhood."

"Ah, my friend, if you only knew the laws of average as operating in the case of atmospheric electricity, you would not lay that pacifying unction to your soul and then be happy," said Sam, seriously.

"Pacifyin' what?" he asked, in astonishment.

"Uction."

"What's unction, I'd like to know?"

"Hope."

"Why not?"

"Well, sir, if you knew it all you would know that the laws of nature are so fixed that lightning must strike just so many times on every square foot of the earth's surface, in order to restore the equilibrium."

"Restore what?"

"The electrical balance or equipoise."

"Wal, say, yu must have been chawin' on a dictionary somewhere," said the landlord.

"Oh, no, I simply learned my business, and of

"Golly, if I had you money I'd try it," replied Spot, who had become quite a good capper.

"I am only telling you, that's all," said Sam, walking into the tavern.

"But say—" mused the landlord, following him thoughtfully. "Nobody in the village has got 'em on their houses."

"Well, if they are wise I have struck a good place. If not, lightning will strike here before a great while, and when it is too late they will remember my warning. Why, when I explained the thing to the people of Canaan, every man who owned a house allowed me to put up the rods. Eh, Spot?"

"Yes, an' barns, too," said he, remembering his experience with the eagles on one.

"But, say, how about that breakfast?"

"I'll go an' see 'bout it right away," said the landlord, starting to go.

But he had no means of measuring his customer, and allowed Spot to overhaul the goods and fit himself as best he could.

He succeeded finally, however, in finding a pair of trousers, the figure of which rather suited his fancy, but much better than the garment fitted him.

However, it was much better than three-quarters of a pair, and so Sam bought them for him.

"Say, young fellow, did you ever sell anything before?" asked Sam.

"Why?"

"Because I don't think so."

"Been here five years."

"Great Moses! How stupid must you have been at first?"

"I guess I know my business," replied the clerk, sourly.

"Well, if you do, you know this isn't it. You ought



"Shoo! go way, dar! Sam, whar is you? Somebody call off de dogs!" he yelled as he clung to the spout with both hands and kicked lustily with both feet. "Call off de dogs! Shoo, dar, shoo!"

Sam, has you gone back on me? Shoo, dar!"

course I found out all about the laws of electricity. And it is just as I tell you, my dear sir. A certain locality may be exempt from the devastating shafts for years, for a lifetime, and those who live in that locality may be rocked into a feeling of security because of it. They may think that because it has not struck that it will not. But nature's laws are as inexorable as are the laws of day and night, and in good time the surcharged clouds will lower upon this village, and the instantaneous messengers of death will fall upon many a home and claim a victim, if their houses are not protected with Smith's patent infallible lightning-rods."

"Great gosh!" exclaimed the nearly paralyzed landlord.

"Be not deceived. In time of peace prepare for war."

The man was nearly dazed, and Spot would have been had he not been used to Sam's style.

He had naturally a fine flow of language; had a good education, and knew what he was talking about, and when it suited his purpose he could astonish almost anybody who did not know him or the fluent style of his chaff.

"Yer don't say so?" ventured the landlord, after he had recovered himself a bit.

"I am giving it to you dead straight. Of course I don't care whether you are prepared for the inevitable or not—"

"Ther what?"

"The inevitable—that which is sure to come, for I am not a resident here. It will only be a dollar or two in my pocket if you do buy, and I can stand it if you do not—eh, Spot?"

"And, say, where is the nearest clothing store? One of my man's trousers' legs have shrunk up a trifle."

"Wal, I should say so. Go right down this street 'bout fifty rods an' yer'll see a place where they sell clothes."

"All right, and I hope breakfast will be ready by the time we get back," said Sam, starting in the direction indicated.

"Guess it will be."

Sam and Spot went to the store.

It was a one-house affair, with a little of everything to sell, and a one-horse clerk was just opening for custom.

"Show me some pantaloons," said Sam.

"There they be," replied the clerk, pointing to a pile of clothing after he had looked the strangers all over.

"Well, don't you ever show your goods?"

"Why, everybody can see 'em," replied the fellow, impudently.

"And if I don't see what I want I suppose I can ask for it, eh?"

"Yea, I a'pose so."

"Well, I don't see what I want."

"What is it?"

"A clerk that knows how to treat customers," replied Sam, but the yokel glared at him in stupid astonishment. "You've got a cash customer here if you've got the goods, so pull yourself together and make a showing."

By this time the fellow began to understand what was wanted of him, but, without apologizing in the least, he went back and pulled down the clothing pile

to chew gum for a living. Good-morning, and if you ever get out of a job come down to New York, and I'll find you one—blowing up eel-skins," saying which he and Spot walked out of the store, leaving that astonished clerk looking after them and wondering who they could be.

Back to the tavern again, they found the landlord and their breakfast waiting, both of which they promptly saluted.

But it was very evident that what Sam had said had taken root in the landlord's mind, for he was very serious, and went for Sam as soon as breakfast was over.

He had consulted with his wife and repeated as much as he could of Sam's eloquent warning, and that accounted for the steak being so nearly burned to a crisp. She had got excited over it.

"Now, say," he began, giving his real Yankee twang a good showing. "'Bout how much will it cost in put yer lightnin' fixtures on my house an' barn?"

"Let me look them over. Spot, go out and see if the horses are all right."

Then he took a fine cigar from his case, and lighting it leisurely with a fancy percussion lighter, warranted to light a cigar in a cyclone, he left a few minutes behind to astonish the landlord, went out and took a look at the buildings, and did a little figuring, more for show than anything else.

"Well, to make you perfectly secure, and so that the insurance companies will take you (for you must know that they are all making a new departure and refusing all risks on buildings not rodged, because

there have been so many losses lately, to make you perfectly secure will cost fifty dollars."

"Well?"

"Of course fifty dollars is nothing against the cancelling of an insurance policy, or the loss of your buildings by a stroke of lightning. But I'll make it come easy to you. I shall be here a few days, and my bill will reduce the price, and, besides that, I shall make it ten dollars less than that figure, because you will be the first one in town to have the rods put up, and of course you can be of service to me in speaking a good word for them among your neighbors."

"Of course I can."

"Well, what do you say?"

"Guess I'll do it," mused he, forgetting probably what he had said to Sam at first about his being smarter than he was.

Great and grand is an eloquent chin!

And before noon Sam and Spot had put up the rods on both house and barn in fine style, and greatly to the astonishment of the neighbors, who couldn't understand why so mean a man as Josiah Brown had gone to the expense of thus adorning and protecting his buildings.

But what Sam had said about insurance companies refusing to take risks on buildings not protected with rods was seed that got in good ground, for it was not long before others began to inquire.

The result was that they found business enough in Falls Village to last them a week, with another man to help.

And by the time they were ready to start for the next place Sam had become quite popular, being set down for the brightest, smartest young fellow that had ever visited the place.

Spot, however, was lonesome. There were no colored people in the place for him to astonish with the recital of his wonderful adventures, but he was partially recompensed by Sam's social triumph.

There was an old-fashioned billiard table in the tavern on which the Yankee yokels played occasionally, and as Sam was a first-rate player, he soon astonished them with his way of making the balls spin around the table and count in all sorts of unexpected ways.

But one morning he bade good-bye to the friends he had made there, and set out for another stamping ground, meanwhile astonishing his employer, Smith, by making unexpected returns, and ordering more rods to be sent to him at Winstead.

It is a fine country, dotted with some excellent farms and small settlements, and Sam resolved to see what sort of a trade he could pick up on the road.

But don't fancy, my dear boys, that he succeeded everywhere he went, because I have only mentioned his successes, for he found many an old Yankee tough who wouldn't have his lightning-rods or his explanatory chin music either.

He knew when he started out that there was a prejudice against the lightning-rod peddler, but he knew that it could not be much greater than that against drummers, and as he had worked his way in that line of business, he felt certain of doing so in this.

As for Spot, he liked it much better, for he had got tired of being a dummy to show off goods on, and it is not to be wondered at, considering his experience. But in this business Sam had to go to the front.

Speaking of tough old customers, Sam met one on the road to Winstead.

"No, goldarn yer picter, I won't have yer dained things on my house for a gift. I don't take no stock in these new-fangled notions, an' as for lightning-rods, I think it's only tempting Providence to put ther dained things up. If yer goin' to be struck by lightning, that ere settles it, an' all ther rods in creation can't stave it off. No, git out, I don't want none of yer pesky contrivances," and he finally got so mad that he was going to set the dog on him.

At the next house, however, he had slightly better luck, although Spot didn't think so.

The man who owned the house was not much inclined to be chinned into the business, but Sam was more disinclined not to sell.

The customer wanted to beat him down, but at the same time he took quite a fancy to Sam, and seemed to be a first-rate fellow himself.

"Call it twenty and I'll do it," said the man, when Sam wanted five more.

"Well, let me see how many feet of rod it will take and then I'll tell you. Got a ladder?"

"Yes—just under the shed yonder."

"Ah, there, Spot?" Sam called.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" answered Spot, leaping down from his high seat on the wagon.

"Whoop up that ladder and go up with the tape-line and measure that roof."

"Oh, I's gwine to be dar," and he started.

"That's a great coon you have with you?"

"He's a hummer. Very proud of his position and his agility at climbing," said Sam, as Spot returned with a light ladder about twenty feet long and placed it against the house, all the time singing:

"Oh, yes, we's gwine to be dar, an' stay dar, An' dance by de light ob de moon!"

He was soon on the shingled roof, over and along which he ran with his rubber boots and tape-line, proud of being noticed.

"Yes, he's a great climber. I'll bet he will get down in some way just as quick if we take the ladder down," said Sam.

"Let's try it," and while Spot was busy they removed the ladder, and then got out of sight behind some shrubbery.

Sam judged that his customer was something of a joker, he entered into the thing so heartily.

Spot, while on the roof attracted the attention of some dogs on the other side of the house, but he kept

right about his work all the same in spite of their barking.

Finally, after he had finished the roof, he let the other end of the tape-line fall to the ground, so that Sam could note the measurement.

But Sam was nowhere to be seen. Neither was the ladder or the man who owned it. He looked wildly around, and finally called several times without receiving any response.

"By golly, dat am one ob Sam's tricks; but I show him a trick good's two ob dat," said he, walking along to the end of the gutter.

With considerable dexterity he got over, and, catching the water-spout, he began to work his way down.

"Putty cold day when I gets left on a roof," he muttered, and then he sang a snatch.

But by this time the suspicion of those dogs had been aroused. They came growling around to the front of the house and espiad Spot just as he had reached within ten feet of the ground.

Here was something he hadn't counted on.

"Shool go way, dar! Sam, whar is you? Somebody call off de dogs!" he yelled, as he clung to the spout with both hands and kicked lustily with both feet.

"Call off de dogs! Shoo, dar, shool Sam, has you gone back on me? Shoo, dar!"

Poor Spot, he could not return to the roof, he dare not jump to the ground, and hanging there was very hard work.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRESENTLY the owner of the dogs gave a whistle, and they ran to the covert where he and Sam were hiding.

Spot dropped to the ground, mad as a wet cat.

"Mighty smart you is, arn't you?" growled Spot, looking in the direction the dogs had taken.

"Well, Spot, how many feet do you make it?" asked Sam, suddenly appearing from the other side of the house, whither he had gone on a quick sneak.

"How many feet?" he growled. "Two."

"What?"

"Dat's what I landed on."

"What do you mean?"

"Wha you mean when you took away dat ladder?" he demanded.

"Who took it away?"

"Somebody did."

"Well, what's the matter with the water-spout?" asked Sam, coldly.

"Nuffin de matter wid dat water-spout. Wha de matter wid dem dogs?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, that's all right," said the owner of them, coming out into sight. "They were only in fun, the same as we were."

"Faul! Yes, dey looked like dey was only in fun. Wanted to hab some fun wid me, I s'pose. Very funny."

"Oh, come off, Spot. Can't you take a joke? What's the matter with you?"

"Joke! Yes, set dogs on a man an' call it a joke. I don't see it," he growled.

"Well, did you see how many feet of rod it will take for that roof?" asked Sam.

"Yes, twenty-two feet down to de gutter."

"All right. Now you is talking. Always remember old Jub's motto—'Business before pleasure,'" said he, without a smile.

"Wnar de pleasure come in, I like to know?"

"After business. Well, Mr. Stone, I will put up the rods at your figure."

And he got the job.

An hour afterward the work was done, the money paid, and Sam and Spot were on their way to find another customer.

The next one proved to be rather a queer sort of a chap. He owned a big straggling house and out-buildings, and had the reputation of being the toughest customer at a bargain, even when he wanted to buy, to be found in those parts.

"I see you have no lightning-rods on your buildings," said Sam, driving up to the front door where the man was at work.

"No. Don't want any," was the gruff reply.

"Have you insurance?"

"No. Don't want any."

"But everybody should be insured," said Sam, trying to lead up to lightning-rods.

"Everybody can as wants to. I don't."

"And yet a fire would surely destroy all you have here."

"Well, I can stand it."

"Very likely; but how much better to save than to lose what you have worked hard for."

"Never worked a day for 'em."

"But somebody must have done so."

"Well, what's that to you?"

"Well, nothing, of course, only you might want to save your property for somebody who comes after you."

"But I don't."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes; nobody ever comes after me but creditors and the sheriff."

"Well, in that case of course you don't care about leaving anything. But, outside of that, I am sure that a set of lightning-rods would improve the looks of your house."

"Don't want to improve it."

"Indeed! Why not, might I ask?"

"Cause it don't belong to me, that's all."

"Oh, then I have been wasting my sweetness on the wrong man," said Sam, laughing.

"You have."

"Well, but can't I see the owner?"

"Certainly, if you go where he is."

"Where might that be?"

"In France."

"Good-day."

"All right," and Sam drove away, both beaten and bluffed.

The man didn't even look after him as he left, but groutily kept on with the work he had scarcely looked up from during the entire interview.

The next man he called on was a minister, who offered to let him put up the rods on his house if he would accept an order for the proceeds of his next donation party in payment.

Sam concluded that life was too short and donations too uncertain, and politely declining the offer, he drove away, and a mile or two further on, before he came to a small village.

In this little village there was a new little church, and of course Sam saw at a glance that it was without lightning-rods, and the first thing he did was to inquire for the trustees.

These he soon found, but he also found that they were very poor.

Indeed, the minister who had offered to give him an order on his next donation was the one who rough and tumbled it with the devil there for three hundred a year and two donations.

They had spent all the money they could raise in building the church, and would have to take chances with the lightning until such time as they had more money.

But one of the trustees assured Sam that there was a well-to-do old German in the village who had been very generous in helping build the church, and perhaps, if he was rightly approached, he might go down still further into his pockets, and insure the monument of his generosity by buying a set of lightning-rods.

Sam resolved to see this noble Teuton and present the case to him with all his eloquence; so he drove to his place of business, and found him to be as tough an old Dutchman as he had ever met with in New York.

"I have been talking with the trustees about putting lightning-rods on the church, but they say they are poor and cannot afford to do so now, but they advised me to come and see you, and perhaps you would contribute something toward it," said Sam, respectfully.

"How id vos about dot?" he asked, after he had listened to Sam.

"I am putting up the latest improvement in lightning-rods, and the trustees think there should be some on the church."

"Whud for?"

"To protect it from lightning, of course."

"To brotect id from der blixen?" asked the Dutchman, with a look of astonishment. "How about dot already?"

"Well, my dear sir, I will not for a moment assume that you do not know the dangers of lightning, for of course you are an educated man, and you know—of course you know—that a building with a steeple on it is in much greater danger of being struck by lightning than a building that has none. Therefore, the trustees wish to have it protected by lightning-rods, and, as I said before, they thought perhaps that you might contribute a portion, if not the whole, of the expense of making the building secure."

"Mine young frient, dot vos Cot's house," said the old man, impressively.

"Certainly."

"I vas gife blendy money to buil dot church for Cot."

"So I have been informed."

"In der fist of I help buil der church mitout a sdeebel. Dot vos all righd. Den der church members dey vont a sdeebel. Dot vos all righd. I pay some more money for dot sdeebel."

"True, but it is in danger of being struck by lightning, Mr. Rengler."

"So. Bud dot vos Cot's church."

"True again."

"Und dein drustees vont me to help py some lightning-rots?"

"Yes, as I have said."

"Dot vos all righd, mine young frient. Dot vos Cot's house, und if he wants to sdrake id mit donder, all righd; id vos none of mine pizness, and he vould sdrake id anyhow if he wanted to. I pays not a cend more on dot church."

That settled it, and Sam knew when the stolid German waved him away and resumed his work that he would put up no rods on that church, unless he did so for nothing. So he waltzed out.

He got one or two orders in the village, however, which obliged him to remain over until the next day, when he resumed his way for Winstead.

But by this time he was nearly out of rods, and it was necessary for him to connect with the next consignment.

And yet he had enough left for one or two more houses, which he expected to get before he arrived at Winstead.

So the next day he started out again bright and early, and in half an hour or so he came upon a farmer who had no lightning-rods on his buildings, and he went for him on general principles.

The owner was a real Yank, in for a "dicker" on almost anything.

Sam stated his case.

"Lightning-rods, hey?"

"Yes, sir, and nothing at this moment would please me more than to receive your order for a set of them for your buildings."

"Wal, now, money's mighty scarce," began the Yank.

But Sam knew them well enough to understand that this was about the way they all begin when approached for a trade, and so he was all prepared for him.

"Oh, yes, I know it, and that's why I am prepared to put you up the finest set of rods in the world at a price so low that it will astonish you," said Sam.

"Wal, but don't talk money; but if you're up for a dicker, maybe we can hitch."

"Dicker, eh? Well, I don't see how I can accommodate you. What do you want to trade for a set of lightning-rods?"

"Wal, now, how'd a hoss strike you?"

"Oh, you see I'm well fixed for horses. What sort of a horse is it?"

"Five year old. Sound and kind," (of his kind) he added, mentally. "You could sell him so as to make a heap of money."

"Let's see him," said Sam, for he had something of the Yankee in his nature.

The horse was led out and shown.

So far as looks were concerned the Yank had probably told the truth, for he appeared to be about five

"Then it's a go."

Spot was in ecstasies. He had always wanted to own a horse, and now for the first time in his life he could do so.

As for Sam, he wasn't certain that there might be something made from the dicker, but he would not have consented to the arrangement had it not been for Spot.

And the way that delighted coon did go over those rods in putting up the rods was something to look at. Sam had never seen him work so before.

And all the while he was at it his mind was actively engaged in building castles, whose foundation was that horse.

He would sell him for three times the amount paid for him, or perhaps swap with somebody and get boot, and, keeping on in this way, he concluded that he could make his own fortune and way in the world, and not be dependent on the whims of others.

"Oh, well, a Yankee dude'll do. G'lang!" and he started up his team.

"Oh, watch me collar de Dude!" said Spot, leaping upon his back.

"Yes, you must always collar a dude or they don't look half dressed," said Sam.

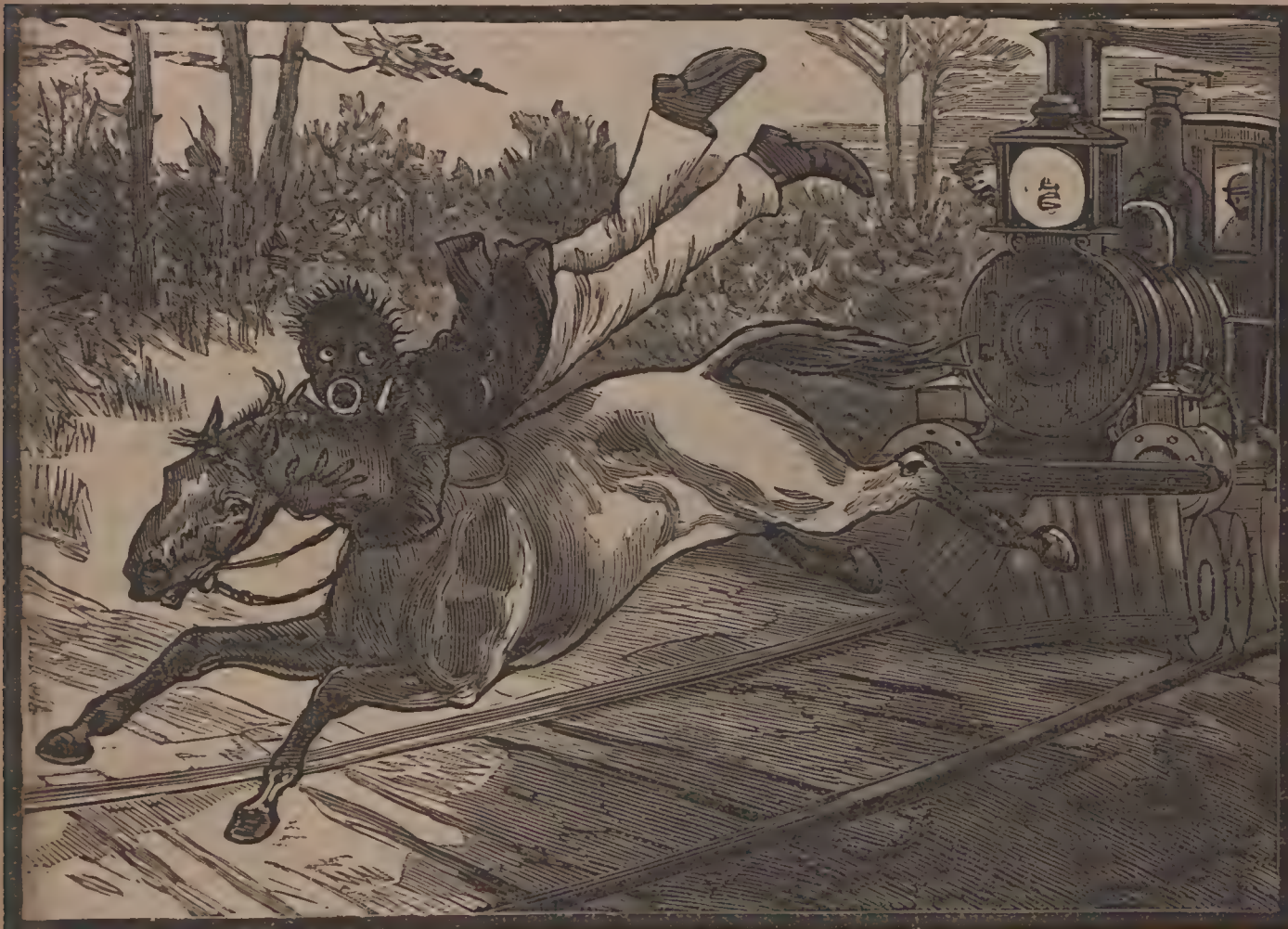
"G'lang, Dude."

"Be gentle with him, Spot, he has been reared a pet," said the farmer.

"Neber you mind 'bout me, I knows all about horses," replied Spot, as he rode away after Sam and his team.

"Wal, by thunder an' gosh, if he knows as much 'bout that hoss as he'll know in a week from now I'm mistaken," said the farmer, as he watched them depart.

And then he went and harnessed up another horse and told his wife he was going to the next town, but if those lightning-rod men returned and asked for



The shrill, warning whistle of a locomotive was heard. The horse reached the railroad track, and dashed down it at break-neck speed, closely followed by the screaming locomotive.

years old, seemed sound, and was quite a good looking.

"I shall charge you seventy-five dollars for putting up the rods and—"

"How much boot will you give me?"

"Not a boot; not a shoe—not a cent," replied Sam, decisively.

Spot pretended to be a good judge of horses, and he gave several winks and nods to Sam, as much as to assure him that the nag was a good one.

"Wal, now, I'll tell you just how it is; I've got to many horses, an' I'd like to get rid of some of 'em anyhow. An' I want lightning-rods on my house an' barn, an' haven't got no cash. So if you'll put 'em up the hoss is yours."

Sam looked the horse over carefully, although he knew but little about them.

But he knew that he had charged double for putting up the rods that he would have charged had it been a cash transaction, and the question was—was the horse all right, and could he make anything out of him?

"He's a good one," whispered Spot.

"What do you know about horses?"

"Knows all about 'em; been brought up among 'em. Buy de horse, Sam, an' I took him off your hands."

"How much?" Sam asked quickly.

"I'll make money on dat horse."

"How much?" Sam asked.

"All right. Throw in a bridle!" he asked, turning

"I ride dat horse," he said to Sam, as they were at work. "I's a great horsebacker."

"And so give up your seat on the wagon?"

"Yes, jus' fo' a change."

"All right. Can you ride bareback?"

"Ride anyhow. Neber seed a horse yet dat I couldn't ride. I can tame 'em, too."

"Is that so?"

"Guess I can. Took lessons ob Reary," said he, proudly.

"All right. It's your meat, and you can do what you like with it."

"Oh, you watch me."

"I will."

It took them an hour or more to finish the job, during which time the farmer had put the bridle on the horse, and had him all ready to start.

The truth was, he was anxious to get him under way from his home as quickly as possible, for reasons which will manifest themselves further on.

"There, sir; you will never be struck by lightning while under any of those rods," said Sam, as the work was completed.

"Wal, I hope you'll have as good luck with the hoss as I du with yer lightning-rods."

"I'll be sure to do so. I thought the horse for my own use, but now I see he wants for something else."

"What's that?" Sam asked.

"Wal, he's a Yankee dude."

him to tell them that he had gone to Hartford, and would not be back for a month.

The horse behaved first-rate. He was either on his good behavior or was in league with his late master, and Spot was more proud than an Arabian prince of his charger.

"How does he go?" asked Sam, after they had left the farm-house awhile.

"Oh, he's jus' ole peaches, Sam. I bet you dat I sells dis yer animile fo' two hundred dollars befo' we leave Winstead."

"All right. I hope you may, for in that case we may trade that way again."

"Dat's money in it, chile. Oh, my! oh, yes," said Spot, with great enthusiasm.

"Well, get some speed on him, and let's see what his style is!"

"Jus' watch me, Sam!" replied Spot, at the same time breaking a switch that grew by the roadside.

"G'lang, Dude!"

He touched the dude lightly at first, but finding that he took no notice of that, he tucked the gad to him harder.

Even then he failed to respond with any movement save that of laying back his ears and shaking his head.

"Get up!" yelled Spot, hitting him again.

And he did get up.

He got up, and very suddenly, and Spot went flying over his head.

"Oh, my, whos dar!" he cried, as he took that unexpected fall.

SAM, and Spot, of course, but Spot was

enough to stop his team and leap down to catch Spot's runaway.

Spot gathered himself up in a dazed sort of a way and looked around.

He was not badly hurt, but somewhat shaken up. He looked as though something had happened entirely unexpected.

"I thought you were such a great horseman!" said Sam, as he approached.

"Wal, so I is, but—"

"But what were you doing there on the ground, I'd like to know?"

"I—I war pickin' myself up."

"Well, if you don't pick up a little more smartness, you'll ekker break your neck or lose your horse."

"By golly, I ride him if it kill me," replied Spot, spunkily mounting again. "You see, Sam, we's strangers yet. Wait til we gets acquainted, an' I'll show you."

"All right. Let her go!"

"I show you," said he, riding ahead, but without using the switch.

But the horse acted as though he was going under protest, and would not get out of a walk for anybody.

Sam followed slowly, gazing him all the while.

"Give him the gad and make him show some style. Come, we are getting near Winstead, and if you expect to sell him there you must work him up."

"G'lang, you big duffer!" cried Spot, again giving him the birch.

The animal reared behind again, and tried to have some more fun with Spot, but he clung to him like death to a nigger.

Then, finding he could not shake him in that way, he suddenly darted ahead, Spot clinging to him with both arms around his neck and his body in the air, just as though he expected to run out from under him.

"Whoa, dar—whoa!" cried Spot, and Sam whipped up his team in order to keep somewhere in sight of him.

The horse was going like the wind, but Spot clung to him for dear life.

He was nearly out of sight in the dust of the road that he raised, when the shrill, warning whistle of a locomotive was heard.

Just then the horse reached the railroad track, and dashed down it at break-neck speed, closely followed by the screaming locomotive.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAM SPRY put all the speed he could get on his team, and dashed toward the railroad, expecting nothing short of death to Spot and his runaway horse, who had taken to the railroad track just in front of a train which was thundering into Winstead, Conn.

But Spot and his horse managed to keep ahead of the locomotive, which had been reversed and was slowing up with all its might to avoid running over them.

Coming, however, to a cross-road, the horse dashed into it, Spot still clinging to his neck for dear life, and the danger of being run over was thereby averted.

But he reached Winstead fifteen minutes ahead of Sam, where his horse, now thoroughly tired out, was stopped by some citizens.

Spot dismounted, but he was so frightened and so short of wind that he could offer no explanation to those who rescued him.

"Who are you and where did you come from?" they asked him, but he only gasped and struggled for breath, while his eyes rolled wildly about and he was unable to speak.

"I guess he's a lunatic, escaped from some asylum," suggested one.

"Yes, I think so, too. Where is the constable?" said another.

"Wa—wa?" began Spot.

"See? Of course he's a lunatic."

"Certainly. Wonder where he got the horse?"

"Stole him, probably, and he ran away with him, like a sensible animal, only he did not break his neck."

"Whar—whar Sam?" asked Spot, glaring wildly around.

"Oh, he's all right," suggested another, laughing.

"Whar am he?"

"Gone to get a drink. Where'd you get the nag?"

"I—I buy'd him."

"In your mind?"

"No, in Falls Village."

"Come off!"

"Fo' shuah. Wish I hadn't," replied Spot, at the same time casting a rueful glance at the beast, as he stood panting and beeked with foam.

"Why, he hasn't been broken yet."

"No mo' has my neck. I—I gib dat hoss to anybody as wants him," he added.

Thus only raised a laugh, and before it had subsided Sam Spry drove up.

"Ah, there! All there?" he asked.

"Guess so—oh, my! oh, yes!" said he, sadly.

"How does your horse work?"

"Works mighty fast, I reckons."

"Well, I should say so, when he can keep ahead of a railway train. Hurt?"

"Yes; oh, my! oh, yes!"

"Where?"

"My feelin's is hurt, Sam."

"How did it happen?"

"Sam, I's a broken hearted man," said he, with saddened comicality that made everybody laugh outright.

"Who broke that useful organ of yours?"

"Dat yer boss."

"How did he do it, Spot?"

"Don't make fun ob me, Sam," he moaned.

"Oh, the horse is all right. He hasn't got used to you, that's all."

"An' I—I don't want him to."

"Oh, pull yourself together and come over to the hotel. There's money in that horse, Spot."

"Money! Deviltrum, I guess, mo' like!"

"Nonsense! Come along."

"Yes, go along and get used to the horse," said the crowd.

It was an effort for Spot to connect himself with that horse again. At all events, he could not be persuaded to straddle him again at all: but seizing him timidly by the bridle, he led him slowly along after Sam, the crowd following him and gazing him.

It raised a blister on Spot's heart, for the horse on which he had set so much store, and which he calculated would be the foundation of his fortune, had proved a bad one, and all his tinsel visions—all his castles in the air—faded like a dream.

But it was just his luck, however, and on the way following Sam he meditated upon it.

"It war better if I had been born dead, or dat somebody had awap me to a yaller dog, an' den kill de dog, so dar would hab been an end to de whole business. Eberything go back on me but de mes-ales," he sighed.

But the horse behaved well enough while he was leading him, and if he could have been sold as he stood and looked he would undoubtedly have brought a good price.

They reached the hotel all right, and Spot put his horse into a stall, looking after him as he did the other two horses, while Sam went to the depot to see if his last consignment of lightning-rods had arrived.

They were waiting his orders, as was a certain perfumed letter from a certain pretty girl in New York whom the reader knows of.

This letter braced Sam up wonderfully, for on its contents depended many of the plans he had for the future.

But Annie Jub was loyal, and although her father flattered himself that he had broken them apart, she did not keep certain secrets from her mother, and she had her approval.

She knew only too well what an old tyrant her husband was, and did not hesitate to assist her daughter against him, especially when she knew that it was his ambition and desire to marry his daughter to a man old enough to be her father, simply because he was a millionaire.

But that pippin is hardly ripe yet, so let us return to the regular business again.

On going back to the tavern, he found Spot seated in a most dejected manner, with a look that would have given a person to believe that he had either lost his best girl or had failed to connect in playing policy.

"What's the matter with you now, Spot?" asked Sam, laughing.

"Oh, yes, laugh an' enjoy yourself. Dat am de way you allus does," said he, dejectedly.

"Well, don't you know that it is better to laugh than be sighing?"

"How you laugh if you in my place, I like to know?" he asked, looking up as if hurt.

"Why, pucker your mouth. Pull in a big lot of wind and then let her go. Easiest thing in the world to laugh if you want to."

"Laugh!" he exclaimed, starting up.

"Yes, certainly."

"Wid dat hoas?"

"Yes. Be an Alexander."

"How dat?"

"Why, he broke and conquered the worst horse in the world."

"Bet ten cents dat he couldn't ride dis yer hoas ob mine!"

"Why, he'd make him as gentle as a sheep. Look at Reary."

"Well, I ain't no 'Zander nor Reary. Dat hoas makes me sick, Sam."

"Pshaw! you've got no sand in you!"

"Guess I habn't. Dat hoas shook it all outen me."

"And you have lost your grip."

"Don't want no grip. I wants to go home," said he, mournfully.

"Oh, yes, you always tire out and want to go home the moment you have any trouble. Brace up and pull yourself together."

"How I do dat?"

"Why, with your native grit."

"No, Sam; I's sick," said he, dolefully shaking his head.

"You look it. What are you going to do with your horse?"

"I—I gibs him away."

"Nonsense!"

"Dat is, if I find anybody fool 'nough to take him."

"You would be the fool, Spot."

"How dat?"

"Why don't you find a sucker?"

"What fo'?"

"To work."

"How I woke a sucker?"

"Why, sell or swap with him."

"Maybe he want to try him. How dat?"

"Well, take chances. Swap him for a poorer looking nag, and even then you'll get even."

Spot was thoughtful.

Perhaps, after all, he might make a push that would even him up, and finally he walked away to ruminate upon it.

"Dar's no knowin' de luck ob a lousy calf and a sick coon, so I try Sam's racket," thought he.

But business before pleasure, Sam's motto, had to come to the front.

So, leaving Spot behind to attend to the distributing of some circulars, calling attention to the fact that the great lightning-rod agent had arrived in town and was prepared to protect the inhabitants of the good town of Winstead from the dire effects of Jove's fiery lances, he went out himself to drum up trade.

His object in every place he struck was to get a chance to put them up on one house, which would stand as a sort of a card, but above all things he wanted a thunder-storm.

He had thus far been singularly unfortunate in this respect, there having been little or no thunder and lightning since he entered his territory, and of course he could neither test his own rods nor find people frightened into thinking seriously of the necessity of possessing a protection against what did not seem a danger.

But during the day he managed to work the school trustees up to such a point that he obtained permission to place them upon the High School house, which Sam regarded as a good snap for further orders.

But he wanted a thunder-storm.

However, he went to work the next day to get out the rods and make ready to place them upon the school-house, one of the most important buildings in the town.

Spot was still very serious and downcast. But he took hold and helped make ready for the school-house job, although he had not ventured yet in further testing his horse to see if he had improved in his behavior any.

The next day was a hot and oppressive one, but business was business, and with the assistance of a carpenter whom he hired to assist him, he and Spot went to work.

It raised Spot in his own estimation when he found that he had a man to boss, and the man was smart enough to compliment him on his agility at getting over roofs and putting up rods.

This made him show up for all he was worth, and the result was that he did nearly all of the work, the carpenter being an adept at bestowing taffy.

Sam was on the ground with the chairman of the trustees superintending the business, for he wanted the job to be a good one, of course.

And while thus employed, a sturdy old citizen and tax-payer of the town came along and wanted to know what was going on.

The chairman explained.

"Lightnin'-rods, hey?" he asked, musingly.

"Yes, sir," put in Sam. "We are taking advantage of the improved discovery of the great and ever to be remembered Benjamin Franklin."

"Ben Franklin?" asked the old citizen.

"Yes, the great and glorious philosopher, patriot, and statesman," replied Sam, earnestly.

"Him as fit inter der Revolution?"

"He did more than that, my dear sir. He served his country nobly in many ways. He was one of the bold signers of that immortal Declaration of Independence that resulted in giving freedom to this glorious country."

"Seems to me I've hearn tell on him," said the old citizen, musingly.

"Why, of course you have, Mr. Oldgun," suggested the chairman of the school committee.

"Wal, Mr. Bile, what's that got to do with this ere scule-house tantrum?" the old tax-payer demanded. Sam was promptly to the rescue.

"Well, sir, the great and glorious Franklin, the statesman, patriot, and philosopher—"

"Hold on. What's a philosopher?" the old man demanded, for he was hickory-headed and couldn't straddle a word of more than two syllables.

"Why, to be a philosopher is to philosophize."

"You don't say so! Was Franklin blind?"

"Oh, no."

"Then how come he to feel—loss—of—eyes?"

Sam staggered under the blow of the unintended pun, but the chairman never winced, because he never saw it.

"You do not understand me, sir. To philosophize is to study over and find out the secrets of nature. This Ben Franklin did while proving that lightning and electricity are identical, and he at the same time discovered that the subtle but terrible fluid seeks good conductors in its passage from the clouds to the earth, while of course being more apt to strike high than low points—such as trees and houses, and if these are provided with metallic conductors the lightning passes from the cloud to the earth through them without light, noise, or harm."

"You don't say so?"

"A veritable fact, I assure you, sir."

"Gosh. How did people do before Franklin found out all this?"

"They suffered greatly from thunder-bolts, and many houses were fired and lives lost until he discovered the great preventive."

"You don't say so! Then they didn't have lightnin'-rods in Bible times?"

"Oh, no! They were not discovered until the eighteenth century," replied Sam.

"Noah's ark didn't have 'em?"

"No—that was under Divine protection."

"Solomon's Temple didn't have 'em?"

"No—for the same reason."

"Methusala didn't wear 'em?"

"I should say not."

"He managed to live quite a while, eh?"

"Oh, yes—nearly a thousand years."

"People used to live longer them days?"

"Yes—according to the Bible."

"Which don't say nothin' 'bout lightnin'-rods?"

"No."

"Then what's the use on 'em, anyway?"

"I have just explained, my dear sir."

"Oh, yu be hanged! I guess yu're one of them chaps as has got cuteness right on the end of yure tongue. Yu've caught this ere fule scule committee, an' they believe all yu tell 'em. It's a goshdarned humbug!" said he, smacking his two hands together.

"You are mistaken, neighbor Oldgun," said the chairman, earnestly.

"No, b'gosh, I arn't. I went tu scule in a log-house, an' that was good enough. But nowadays people's gone crazy. Now yu arn't satisfied with havin' a big tu-story house, all shingled, clap-boarded an' painted, but yu must get lightnin'-rods on tu it. I'm a tax-payer an' I object," said he, decidedly.

"Oh, you are behind the age, Mr. Oldgun," ventured the chairman.

"No, I'll be goldarned if I be. I have hearn tell of

"No, sir. I am only too glad that the elements give promise of wrath to come. You, sir, will fly for shelter sooner than I."

"Git out! Never was 'fraid of thunder an' lightnin' in my born days, an' I have allus noticed that it's only them as is afraid that ever get hurt. But the idea that this scule-house wouldn't get struck if ther Lord only thort best to strike it! Why, it's irreligious, it is, b'gosh."

"Oh, no. But you take your chances without lightning-rods and I will take mine with them; then, if you live, see which of us has the best of it."

"Yu're a flippant cuss, but I'll bet yu'll run for cover at the first crack."

"Remain here and see."

"All right."

"Well, it really looks as though we were going to have a tough one," said the committeeman, looking

with a hundred electric scintillations darting all around him.

It also caught Oldgun, and for an instant he was seen to be standing on his head, and yelling quite as loud as was poor Spot.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was a regular old-fashioned thunder-bolt, and Sam Spry's partially adjusted lightning-rods had undoubtedly saved the school-house from utter destruction.

As it was, there had been a terrible rattling, and poor Spot as well as that Yankee kicker and crank, Mr. Oldgun, lay prone upon the ground, while the others were wildly dancing around from the effects of the shock, without knowing whether they really stood on their heads or their heels.



That unfortunate coon, still clinging to the detached rod, was dangling in mid-air, with a hundred electric scintillations darting all around him.

all of these notions, such as the tellygraf, fotograf, tellyphone, an' sich nonsense, but I don't b'lieve in 'em. Ther idea that ther war anything that was wuth anythin' that arn't spoken of in the Bible. Folks lived longer then than they do now, with all yu're new contrivances. I won't pay a cent toward it."

"Oh, I guess you will," said the chairman.

"Doggoned if I do! There's yu're algebray, trigemony, punctuation, longation, feelosify, jewology, coekalogy, frazeology, pneumatics, hydrostatics, elementary, grammar, tortology, trigenomity, square rule, fractions, decimals, composition, an' about a dozen other things I hear my chilren torkin' 'bout, an' now yu're goin' for lightnin'-rods! Great Beltshiazza! I kick," said he, smashing his fists together savagely.

Sam had been so much interested in the old Yankee kicker that he had not noticed that the sky was darkening, and that heavy portentous clouds were rolling up ominously from the west.

But such was the case, and for the first time since he had been peddling and putting up lightning-rods there seemed to be a chance coming to test them, if not to frighten the people into buying them.

"Looks like a shower," said the bold committeeman, looking along the weather line.

"I guess there's lightning in those clouds,"

said Sam, taking also a look.

"Say arn't yu skeered?" asked the old man of Sam.

"Scared! Why should I be?"

"Why, ober count of ther lightnin'!"

"Oh, no, my dear sir. I know I am on the safe side, and that my rods will safely carry away all the electrical venom that the elements can send."

"Yu don't say so! I'll bet yu'll run at ther first clap of thunder."

up at the angry clouds now soaring up from the west in dark folds, while that dead calm before a storm settled almost sullenly upon the scene.

"I am glad of it. Hurry up there, Spot, and send down that ground connection," he added, calling to Spot and the carpenter.

"Dar's gwine to be trouble up heah, Sam," called the darky from the school-house roof.

"Oh, that's all right, Spot. Hurry and send down the ground connection on this side, and there'll be no danger."

"Gracious! what angry-looking clouds!" the committeeman said, addressing Oldgun.

"Why, nater's humpin' herself to show yu what a fule yu are. It'll be the means of knockin' this 'ere new-fangled scule-honse all tu flinders," he replied.

"Wait and see," said Sam, who knew that ground connection had been made on one side of the building, and he was now hurrying to complete the other one.

The carpenter was already frightened half out of his wits, and was on the point of going down the ladder for solid earth and cover. While Spot, without looking up at the black masses of clouds overhead, was doing his best to complete the connections.

All at once there came a terrific dash and thundering crash right out of the black cloud overhead that

But, almost immediately following the thunder-bolt, the rain came down in ragged, raging torrents, and the wind, not to be left out in the cold, began to bowl, surge, and hoop it up in the wildest manner.

Naturally, everybody got wet, for not one of the party was there that knew enough to go in when it rained, just then, and it only took about three seconds to drench everything capable of "taking water."

But the committeeman and Sam were the first to recover and make a dive for the basement door of the school-house, whither the carpenter soon followed them, with his hair on end and his eyes protruding.

Crash followed crash, and the bolts of fire darted wildly about in every direction, as though anxious to test, not only Sam's rods, but everything else on earth.

Spot and old Oldgun lay sprawling and kicking upon the ground, wet to the skin, of course, but showing conclusively that they had not been killed.

Sam looked out into the descending deluge, and saw poor Spot kicking about there in the mud and water.

As for Oldgun, he didn't care a snap for him, anyhow. He was a blooming old crank at best, and a smart stirring up by lightning would do him good, more especially as he didn't believe in lightning-rods.

But he rushed back out into the rain to where Spot

was struggling heavily, and so they sat him up

Presently he opened his eyes and looked wildly

shock from the electric spark that went fooling and sizzling around that lightning-rod upon which he was at work, but he wasn't dead yet.

It takes a first-class thunderbolt to knock out a healthy coon, unless it hits his shins.

"How are you, Spot—are you hurt?" asked Sam, with some anxiety.

"Is I hurt! Whar be I?"

"Right here, my boy."

"Whar right heal?" he asked, looking around.

"Just on the same old spot."

"Who hit me?"

"Nobody."

"Who fire dat gun?"

"There was no gun fired."

"Well, den, who fire off dat mountain?"

"Been no mountain shot off, Spot. It was only a flash of lightning," said Sam.

"All right," said Sam, who by this time had got the best of the wild, reckless storm that was overruling outside, and was once more himself again. "I'll go with you."

Together they made a dive out into the storm, and after much slipping, slushing, and wabbling around they managed to get citizen Oldgun by the arms and dragged him into the school-house basement.

He was almost unconscious, and so they placed him up in the corner, leaning against the partially recovered Spot.

The wind howled, and the dampness descended from the clouds at about the rate of an inch a minute.

Also the thunder howled and bellowed, and snapped around like a forty-ton Fourth of July fire-cracker.

There was a smell of sulphur in the air, at least so some old and timid sinners said, and the rain god seemed to have on his coarsest sieve.

"G—racious! Great storm, eh?" said Oldgun, wringing the water from the sleeve of his coat.

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" murmured Spot.

"Say there's nothing in lightning, eh?" said Sam to Oldgun.

"Whoop! hear that?" he exclaimed, as another crazy, ripping thunderbolt went zig-zag through the air, leaving the smell of sulphur and a rip tearing with those who heard it.

"Well, you don't believe in it?" said Sam, confidentially.

"Oh, my! Hear that?"

"Of course; but what do you care?"

"I—I—what is it, anyhow?"

"A thunder storm."

"G—racious! what's the matter with it?"

"She's broke loose."



There came another crash, louder, if possible, than any of the others had been, and it seemed to shake the very earth from center to circumference. "Wal" howled Spot. "Oh, my!" moaned the carpenter.

"Boo—hoo!" cried Oldgun, and again he fell upon his marrow bones.

"Flash ob what?"
 "Lightning."
 "Whar am dem lightning-rods?"
 "You were clinging to one of them."
 "Am dat so?"
 "Certainly."
 "Did it a'plode?"
 "No, you simply got a shock."
 "Oh, my, oh, yes! I know'd dat some'd bust or happen to me," said Spot, reflectively.
 "But how about Mr. Oldgun?" asked the trembling committeeman, for the storm was yet at its height.
 "Oh, let him soak," said Sam.
 "Soak?"

"Yes. It may open his pores so that there will be a chance for a little modern intelligence to get in."

"But he is a rich man."

"Well, can't he stand it?"

"Oh, let's go out and bring him in."

"Nonsense!"

"Nonsense! Why?"

"Because he is just as wet as he can be," replied Sam.

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" put in Spot.

"But he may have been struck."

"By what?"

"Lightning."

"Oh, no. Lightning would have no show on that skull of his. The result would be greater if it struck a bale of cotton."

"Oh, no. Let's bring him in," plead the committeeman, for he wanted to do something for neighbor Oldgun, because he was one of Winstead's rich men.

Spot had closed his eyes for a rest, and was trying to get his bearings.

Citizen Oldgun was trying to open his.

He felt that he had no bearings.

Spot felt that it would be all right if he didn't happen to find his.

He was utterly indifferent.

The committeeman felt it to be his duty to rub Mr. Oldgun.

He was a rich man.

And finally Oldgun opened his eyes and began to take in his surroundings.

About the first thing he saw was our friend Spot,

whom he remembered to have seen before, putting up lightning-rods.

Putting forth all his strength, he roused himself and looked at the coon, who was also gasping for breath.

Mind you, the storm was even then at its height,

and Oldgun in his shelter was draining off at least three gallons a minute from his person, while Spot

had got rid of the most of his catchings.

"Y—yo—yu're a nigger," said he.

But Spot made no reply.

"Or—well, maybe—say, what was it, anyhow?"

Still Spot refused to speak.

"Thunder shower, eh? Maybe you was struck by lightning an' turned black. They say lightning does strange things. Say, who be you, anyhow?"

Spot still refused to speak.

"That is all right, neighbor Oldgun. It's a great storm," suggested the committeeman.

"Well, I should say so. Look at Brother Pinch!

Turned him black!" said Oldgun, pointing to Spot.

"Oh, yes," said the said chairman of the school committee. "Lightning works that way sometimes."

"Tie her up!" exclaimed Oldgun, now thoroughly frightened.

"Can't do it. She's only commenced."

"Oh, my gracious!"

"From twenty-five to fifty dollars will insure you. Have it?"

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" put in Spot.

"Wal, say, what's got into things?" asked Oldgun, evidently half-paralyzed by the terrible storm around him.

"Will you insure against lightning?" again asked Sam, clinging to him.

"How much did you say?"

"From twenty-five to fifty dollars, according to your house that you wish insured against lightning."

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" put in Spot, who was gradually recovering.

"It isn't worth it," growled Oldgun.

But just as he said so there came a clap of thunder, accompanied by a flash of lightning, that seemed to shake the earth from core to circumference.

"What is that you say?" asked Sam, catching him just as he got the shakes.

"I—I—well, perhaps you are right, so put 'em up," he moaned.

"All right," replied Sam, having caught a point hot from the bat.

"Oh, my—oh, yes! But how 'bout dat?" asked Spot.

"Oh, Lord! Say, did lightning strike you?" asked Oldgun of Spot.

"Strike me!" he exclaimed.

"Did it hurt you?"

"Hurt me!"

"Yes."

"Well, how 'bout dem clogs, if it didn't hurt me?" demanded Spot, at the same time struggling to his feet.

"I—I guess you're hurt!" said Oldgun.

"Now, where do new inventions come in?" asked Sam of the old crank.

"How?"

"Well, how would a modern wringing-machine come in about now?" he asked, laughing heartily.

"Gosh! I wish I could be put through one on 'em 'bout now," he growled, as he squeezed water from one of the legs of his old baggy trousers.

Then came another clap of loudness, that shook things worse than ever.

"Oh, Lord—oh, Lord!" cried Spot, and he went right down on his marrow bones, instantly followed by Oldgun.

"Save me, too, please!" he whined, and seemingly

"Now what do you say?" asked Sam, placing his hand upon his shoulder.

"Ha!" and he looked aghast.

"Lightning-rods?"

"Y—yes."

"Give me an order to put them on your buildings?" "Y—" and he was about to hesitate again, when another "rip" brought him to terms.

"What do you say, Mr. Oldgun?" asked Sam, cool as a watermelon.

"Y—yes, put 'em on," he moaned.

"You witness this!" said Sam, addressing the committeeman.

"Yes, I do."

"Good enough. Consider yourself protected for the remainder of your life," said Sam, writing in his order book.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" put in Spot.

is over, and more especially since your life has undoubtedly been saved by the single rod—eh?" he added, turning to the committeeman.

"Most undoubtedly. Why, I think we should all of us have been killed had it not been for that lightning-rod, and the school-house would in all probability have been ruined, if not a heap of smoldering ruins. Oh, you owe Mr. Spry your life without doubt, neighbor Oldgun."

"Wal, put 'em up. Goldarn ther thunder, anyhow!" he growled, as he walked away.

"You've got him!"

"You bet I have!"

"Oh, my—oh, yes! He war scarred right inter it," said Spot, and he laughed loudly.

"No—he wasn't the only frightened man there was," laughed Sam.

"Who war frightened?—not me?"



The landlord and everybody else shouted, and a yellow dog would undoubtedly have put in some fine work had not the infuriated horse got his in first and kicked the mongrel over the fence.

in answer to his prayer there came another crash, and a shade tree standing across the way was transformed into toothpicks in about the sixteenth part of a second.

This caused both Spot and Oldgun to bellow some more, and brought the frightened carpenter to his knees also. In fact, the committeeman looked wild and shaky.

"Brace up, gentlemen, brace up. There is no danger so long as even one of our rods has a ground connection," said Sam.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" Spot murmured, sadly.

"I—I— isn't it dreadful?" said Oldgun.

"Yes, for those unprotected by lightning-rods, don't you think so?" said Sam.

"I—yes. I—I guess so," he stammered.

"Better let me put you up a set."

"Well, I—wait till—the shower is over," he said, falteringly.

"Oh, no, for after the danger is over you won't think there is any use in putting up protectors."

"Wal, then there's no need of 'em, and—"

He was about to continue, for there was just then a lull, and he rose to his feet, feeling that the danger was over. But as he did so there came another crash, louder, if possible, than any of the others had been, and it seemed to shake the very earth from center to circumference.

"Wal!" howled Spot.

"Oh, my!" moaned the carpenter, who also had indulged in the belief that the worst of the trouble had passed.

"Boo—ho!" cried Oldgun, and again he fell upon his marrow bones, and with upturned eyes muttered prayers for forgiveness.

"How vane are all things here below!" moaned the carpenter.

"Why, cert, if you haven't lightning-rods," replied Sam.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!"

It had really been a terrific thunder-storm, and the lightning had struck several houses in Winstead, and at least three people had fallen victims to the heavenly bolts, all of which stirred up business for Sam Spry.

It was just what he had been wishing for, knowing from what he had heard that when such storms did come to northern Connecticut they came to make business lively for somebody.

But, notwithstanding its potential fury while it lasted, it was quickly over. At all events, it passed over Winstead in a few sensational minutes, and again the sun came out behind the dark clouds that were sailing away to the northeast for the benefit of other towns.

That frightened gang crept from the room where they had been sheltered, and gazed wildly around upon the washed and lightning-riven scene, the three mostly frightened ones drawing sighs of relief at the prospect, the evidences being strong that the racket was over with.

"Oh, it's all right now," said Sam.

"Thank goodness!" exclaimed the committeeman.

"Oh, my—oh, yes!" put in Spot, for he was getting brave now that the danger was past.

"I will be over to put up your rods the first thing to-morrow, Mr. Oldgun."

"Wal—"

"That is all right. You have ordered them, as I have good proof, and I cannot think you would be so small as to try and back out, now that this little spurt

"Oh, no—I should say not!" put in the carpenter.

"Wha' dat? Who war frightened? Wha' you do down on you knees dar, hey?"

"I went down to see what you were doing on yours."

Then the carpenter laughed.

"How 'bout dat lightning-rod?"

"Well, what of it?"

"How 'bout gettin' struck by lightning' like I was an' all broke up? Dat war what made me fall on my knees. Look at me! See dem clogs? Guess you'd fall down if you got dat struckin' I gor," said he, most indignantly.

"Come, now, pull yourselves together and finish this job," said Sam. "The storm has passed and everything is lovely again."

Both Spot and the carpenter glanced up at the sky with evident concern, but seeing everything lovely once more, there was no excuse for their not going aloft to finish their work.

As for Sam and the committeeman, they employed themselves in looking around to see what damage had been done by the lightning.

There were startling evidences of its work all around, and one building at least was in flames, although the school-house had escaped injury.

"See?" asked Sam. "Great protectors."

"Great," replied the committeeman, in earnest, for the evidence was right before his eyes.

Well, Spot and the carpenter finished the job, and it was pronounced perfect.

But the great boom had been in the destructive thunder shower that caused such a loss of property and life, and, besides that, had nearly frightened the life out of people.

And the story of that storm, as told by those who had experienced it at the school-house, created great interest, especially when it was learned that Mr. Oldgun had acknowledged that his life had been saved, and that he had ordered a set of rods for his own buildings. It created a boom for lightning-rods right away.

Nature had certainly put in a good stroke of business for Sam Spry, for almost before he could realize it he had orders enough to last a month.

Everybody in the town of Winstead seemed determined to have lightning-rods, and Sam was perfectly willing they should have all they could pay for. Indeed, he had to employ two other men to put up his orders, and his employers in New York were knocked silly by the extent of his orders for lightning-rods.

But, even though business is good, we must not forget Spot's horse.

Somebody told him that the great secret of Reary's success as a breaker and trainer of horses was his kindness to them, and when he spoke to Sam about it, that bright and enterprising young man fell right in with the idea and advised him to try it.

"Funny you never thought of that before, Spot. You are too easily discouraged. Now take your horse out for a little walk, just to exercise him, but before doing so buy a dozen apples and put them in your pockets. Be kind and gentle with him, and every now and then take an apple out of your pocket and give it to him."

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" replied Spot, and, as the idea was endorsed by Sam, he went at it to work it out as quickly as possible.

Sam watched him with a smile, for he had arranged with the store-keeper where he knew Spot would go for his apples, and wanted to see how it would work.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Spot got his coat pockets full of apples and started for the stable where he proposed to be kind to his horse, for Sam had told him that he could manage him first-rate if he only treated him with apples and kindness.

He had the apples, and was willing to shed kindness by the quart as well.

Sam sauntered out to see the result.

"Call him by name, Spot. Call him Dude," said he, as they entered the barn.

"Oh, my, oh, yes!"

The Hibernian hostler confronted him, and it was evident that he was not feeling angelic.

"Oy soy, Mr. Sprys, aythur dat oild hoss av yourn has got ter have this barn or Oi shall," said he.

"What's de matter wid you?" asked Spot.

"Sure, an' there's nothin' ter matter wid me, but it's yer hoss as has ther Ould Nick in him."

"How dat?"

"Do yees moind that howl in ther doore?" he asked, pointing to a partition door that looked somewhat broken up.

"Yes."

"Wal, be the shillalah av St. Patrick, that same howl came within an inch av bein' in my scone, so it did."

"H—how dat?"

"Sure, I tuck him out av ther stall ther mornin' after tratin' him ter as dacint a breakfas' as iver a boss stuffed out his stomach wid. I tuck him out ter curry him down an' make him feel loike a gentleman's boss."

"Dat was all right," replied Spot.

"All right! Who was it all right for? Fust off, he lay back ther ears av him as though he wanted a fight, but Oi gave him a clip wid ther comb, an' bid him behave himself or Oi'd break iver yone in his body, an' wid that he croid jehaw, an' let go his noigh hoidin' fut, that went within an inch av me head, an' made ther howl in ther doore beyant, had luck ter him."

"Dat, yer see, was cos he feel be oats," said Spot. "Well, not another oat will he fale by me givin' him anything but straw. Sure, that's dacint enough for a dirth baste loike him."

"Now dat's because you isn't kind to him."

"Koid! Bad luck ter ther four-legged spalpeen! He wants murderin', that's ther sort of koidness he wants," replied the hostler.

"Ever beah 'bout dat Reary, de boss-ther?"

"Faith, I knewed a man named Rory onct, but he had nothin' ter do wid hosses."

"Dat yer boss an' a plinn' fo' kindness," said Spot, going toward the stall where the animal in question was standing.

"Well, begorra, lave him poine."

Spot didn't know for a certainty whether the horse was pining for sympathy and kindness, but he took Sam's word for it, as he did for everything else.

"Whoa, Dude, whoa, ole boy! I's got somefin' nice fo' you," said Spot, timidly going into the stall alongside of the animal.

"Hould on there, nanger!" cried the Hibernian hostler. "Shall Oi go for a doctor?"

"No; give him a show," suggested Sam.

"Beggorra, an' he'll get a foine wan."

"Whoa, dar, Dudey—whoa, boy! Oh, dar amn't nuffin de matter wid you. Ob cose not. An' wha de matter wid dat?" said Spot, holding an apple to the horse.

There didn't appear to be anything the matter with it.

There didn't appear to be anything the matter with the animal's appetite, either.

Whether or not he was yearning for kindness was still a problem, but there was no sort of doubt but that he was yearning for apples very much.

"See dat yer?" Spot asked, looking at the hostler

at the moment he was giving the horse another apple, during which he nearly lost a finger with it.

"Oh, begorra, we sa it, an' you fale it," replied the Irishman, laughing.

"Oh, my—oh, my!" they heard him moan.

"What's the matter, Spot?"

"Nuffin much," he replied, holding his thumb in his mouth to ease the pain.

But while he was doing this the horse got away with the apple, and began nosing around for another one.

And he soon discovered that Spot had them in his coat pocket. He made a determined nip for one of them, biting right through the coat, and taking the apple as well as a large piece of coat.

"Whoa, dar—whoa!" he yelled.

"What's the matter now, Spot?"

"N—nuffin much."

"Oh, he's all right now. What did I tell you? Why, a few apples and a little kindness will make a good horse of the worst one that ever lived."

"Oh, my, oh, yes!"

"Beggorra, Oi don't belave that all ther apples an' prates in Connecticut wud make a dacint baste av him," said Pat.

"Well, you just wait and see."

"Sure, Oi might not live long enough."

"Oh, yes, you will. Give him all you have got with you, Spot," he added.

"Oh, my, you bet," he answered back, for he thought he had discovered a brand new way to make something of his horse.

"Who wud have such a baste as that? If yees war goin' a few molles yer'd have ter take a bushel av apples along ter coax him wid."

"Oh, it's only gettin' on de right side ob him now, dat's all," said Spot.

"That's right, my boy, get on the right side and you will have no trouble."

"Oh, my, you bet!"

Sam began to get uneasy for some reason or other. "Given them all to him yet?" he asked.

"All but one. Now, Dude, beah am de bes' one ob de lot fo' de last," he said, holding it toward him.

The horse made a wicked snap for it.

"Hole on dar, chile. You mus' kiss me befo' you gets dis yer," and he began patting the horse's neck and saying all sorts of kind and endearing things while holding the apple behind him out of his reach.

But this didn't appear to please the Dude at all, and he began to get fractious and to dance around, to the imminent danger of his owner's big feet.

Spot gave him the remaining apple.

"Dar you is, you pig!" said Spot.

"An', begorra, he'll kick ther ears off av yees, now that yees have no more," put in the hostler.

"Oh, no. Spot is settin' in his kindness now," said Sam. "Just watch him."

"Faith, Oi will."

"So dar, Dudey—so!" they heard Spot say, as though addressing a cow.

And the next minute the interior of that barn was full of splinters, horse's hind legs, crashing, coughing, jumping, smashing, and out of that wreck flew Spot, landing clear across the barn floor.

Sam and the hostler lit out for safety.

Spot was bruised and paralyzed; but such a riot was never kicked up by one horse before in the world.

In less time than it takes to write it that stall was utterly demolished, and the horse, made wild by eating that last apple, which had been scooped out and filled with red pepper, became a terror upon the earth.

Breaking out of his headstall, he made a wild rush for the open barn door, kicking one of them into kindling wood, and then out into the barn-yard, where he went for some cows.

In three seconds he succeeded in kicking up a panic with his hind legs. The cows bellowed and tried to get out.

The old bull lowered his horns and tried to get in.

The landlord and everybody else shouted, and a yellow dog would undoubtedly have put in some fine work had not the infuriated horse got his in first and kicked the mongrel over the fence.

By this time, amid the shouting, coughing, bellowing, and general excitement, the bull got in his work, charging upon the hind quarters of the horse and rushing him right through the barn-yard fence, crushing it down with a crash.

Then it seemed suddenly to occur to that horse that he was not wanted there, so he made a wild break for the highway, arousing consternation on every hand.

Away he went like the wind down the road, followed by every dog in the neighborhood, together with the triumphant bull, bellowing for more revenge.

Poor Spot picked himself up out of the splinters and ruins, and looked wildly about him in a dazed sort of a way.

Sam and the Irish hostler were the first to remember him.

"Are yees hurt?" asked the hostler.

"How is it with you, Spot?" asked Sam, really with much anxiety, for, to tell the truth, he had never expected such an explosion from his little trick, and was not certain whether his man was broken 'ad pieces or not.

"Are yees all there?" again called the hostler.

"Speak, Spotty, old boy, are you hurt?"

"Oh, Lord, oh, my!" he groaned, as they assisted him out of the ruins.

"Didn't Oi tell yer he wnr ther Ould Nick?"

"Feel yourself over, Spot, and see if you are really hurt," said Sam.

"Wa—" and after saying this much he began to feel himself over to see if none of him had been kicked away or left among the splinters.

"Are yees hurt?"

"Is I hurt! I—I—oh, Sam, whar am dat hoos?" he finally asked.

"Well, Spot, I can't locate him exactly, but if he has kept on going as fast as he was when I saw him last, he must be in Boston by this time."

"Sure, he war goin' loike ther wind."

"Boston?" mused Spot.

"Easy enough."

"Am dar any possibility ob he eber gettin' back?"

"Rather a poor show, Spot."

"An' am we gwine toward Boston?"

"Not exactly."

"Den all right."

"Why?"

"Luf him keep right on."

"What, and lose your horse?"

"Yes, if dar am such good luck fo' me."

"Faix, Oi think it's dangerous ter give an ugly hoos

sour apples," said Pat.

"Souer! Dem war sweet ones," said Spot.

"Why didn't you work in the kindness with the apples, Spot?" asked Sam.

"Kindness! Didn't I?"

"I don't know. I didn't see you."

"Put in whole bunks ob kindness, Sam. Call him all sorts ob nice names, an' jus' den he began ter fling himself about."

"And by the looks of things I should say he also flung you and his stall about."

"Oh, my—oh, yes! Sam, I's got all ob dat hoos I want," he added, sadly.

"What! Going to let him go?"

"Sure, nobody'll put hand on him," said the hostler.

"Sam, I's gwine ter luf him go. All I hope is dat he'll neber come back."

"All right. I guess he won't."

"Dat am some mo' ob my luck, Sam," he added, and just then the landlord put in an appearance, having patched up his fence and secured his cattle.

As for that yellow dog, the last thing seen of him was his tail, as he was working himself into a hollow stump, out of harm's way.

"Say, what in thunder is the matter with that 'ere hoos?" demanded the landlord.

"Well," said Sam, "it appears that he couldn't stand kindness."

"Kindness?"

"Yes. Spot was feeding him with apples, and when he came to the last one he began to kick."

"Kick! I thought it was a threshing-machine gone crazy. Look at the stall! Gosh-all-Jerusalem! Say, you'll have to pay for that, Mr. Coon, also for my fence," added the landlord, turning to Spot.

"Oh, my! oh, yes, I pay fo' anything if dat hoos don't come back to me."

"Why don't you sell him?"

"Don't want nuffin to do wid him."

"Well, say, landlord, why won't you take him in payment for damages?" asked Sam, thinking of more fun.

"Take him for damages, and then have the pesky varmint do more? Say, du yu see anything green in my eye?" he asked, pulling down the lid of it.

"Well, no. Your optical apparatus seems to be in the possession of its normal color. But business is business, you know."

"Wal, yes, but it ain't my style of business to buy crazy hosses. Now, he must pay the damage he has done, and possibly he may do more out on the road."

"Oh, Lord—oh, my!" moaned Spot, for the idea was forced upon him that he might be made liable to damages enough on account of that horse to send him to prison.

Oh, that he had never thought of buying a horse! Oh, that he could set that horse upon the tricky farmer of whom he obtained him!

"Say, Spot, I thought you said you knew all about horses—that you were a horseman?" said Sam, after a pause.

"Sam, if dat am a horse I gibe it up."

"But you must pay the damage he has done, all the same," said the landlord.

"Oh, yes; of course he expects to do that!" said Sam, airily.

"Sam! Sam! It will ruin me!" whispered Spot to him.

"Oh, well, I can't help that. You said you knew all about horses, and wanted to buy that one. It's no sickness of mine; so brace up and get down to business," said Sam, walking away.

The truth was he wanted to get out of sight somewhere so that he could have an uninterrupted laugh; and so he left poor Spot to the tender mercies of the landlord and the less tender jibes of the Irish hostler, neither of whom let up on him in the least.

Poor Spot wished that he were dead, that the earth would open and, if not to swallow him up, to at least hide him until the storm of his present troubles had passed and a little sunshine came out on him again.

There was only one ray of consolation gleaming through this black cloud of misfortune, and that was that the horse had surely escaped; that he had perchance gone out on some open plain and become a wild horse of the pampas, or an unnamed steed for some future Mazeppa to be bound to. He had all he wanted of him, and wasn't particular what became of him, so long as he saw no more of him.

Badly broken up, he limped from the barn to the bar-room, where the landlord applied a lotion to his bruises.

Pat, the hostler, looked on and wished that he had also been bruised.

Meantime, the four-footed terror was being freely discussed by the citizens, who had gathered about the scene of his wild transactions, and the question appeared to be what the deuce was the matter with him, anyway, for no horse in his senses would behave in any such a way as he had.

But, while this discussion was going on, and while Spot was resting and thinking what was likely to happen him next, up marched a couple of citizens, leading the horse, one on either side.

There was a scattering from in front of that tavern, and Spot tried to crawl into a burglar-proof safe out of danger.

"Take him away!" shouted several.

"What for? Whose horse is it, anyway?"

"Where did you find him?" asked the landlord.

"Down here trying to drink the mill-pond dry," replied one of the citizens.

"Something must be the matter with him," said the other citizen.

"Well, I should say so," said the landlord, and then several loungers helped him laugh.

"He spit and kicked, and something red came out of his mouth."

"Sure, he's worth four dollars," said the Irish hostler.

"You gib fo' dollars fo' him?" asked Spot.

"No, nor four cints. But yeess can get that much for his hide an' hoofs."

"Oh, the horse is all right now," said one of the men, who held him by the head. "Somebody gave him something that made him wild."

"Apples make a hoss wild?" asked Spot.

"Yes, if there's red pepper in 'em."

"All right. Took him outen de barn, an' heah am your fo' dollars," said he sadly.

In a few minutes this transaction was finished, and the horse put back again into the barn he had so nearly ruined. He was quite nervous and frothed considerably at the mouth, but the ugliness seemed to have been taken out of him in some way, although Spot was not the man to believe it.

ing certain that he could ride as fast as the horse could possibly run.

Spot watched him out of sight, but as it was early yet, Sam was not there.

And how he did laugh!

His mouth seemed to be trying to take in one of his ears on either side.

"Oh, by golly, look at him!" he roared, as the landlord joined him. "Look at dat Italian! I bet he am de sickest man in dis yer State befo' dis time," said he.

"And what did you get for him?"

"Look a dar," said he, pointing to the bear that was chained to a tree close by.

"What! Swapped for that bear?"

"Oh, my, you bet."

"Thunder! eat of the frying-pan into the fire. And what are you going to do with him, I'd like to know?"



After the expiration of the honeymoon, there was a change in the firm name, so that it read Jub, Spud & Co.

"It was deviltry, I guess."

"Well, say, who owns the horse, anyway?"

"That man," replied the landlord, pointing to Spot, who was still trying to hide.

"Here's your horse, mister, and you want to pay on two dollars apiece for returning him."

"No, I don't," said Spot.

"Oh, but you must."

"Took him away! He's no hoss ob mine. Took him away, or he kick you dinner outen you fust you know."

"Kick! Why, he's all right now. The trouble was he had something in his mouth."

"In he's mouf! I fank it war in he's heels, de way he chucked 'em round."

"No. Somebody has been playing a joke on him, that's all."

"All! Wal, you can't play no joke on me. I's no hog, an' I knows when I's got all I want. Took him away!"

"We shall do nothing of the kind, and if you don't answer down with four dollars, we'll have you arrested and put in pond with your horse."

"Well, say, will you took dat hoss fo' de fo' dollars?" asked Spot, earnestly.

"Oh, no. You can't catch us in a snap of that kind, and then have us arrested for stealing your horse."

"No, not if we know ourselves. Come down with four dollars, or we will call an officer. What do you say?"

Spot looked beseechingly around.

"Better do it," said the landlord, aside to him, "or they have the law on their side."

"Oh, Lord! oh, my!"

That night an Italian with a tame performing bear put up at the tavern, and Spot became greatly interested in the animal.

But the Italian looked weary and sad, just as though life to him was not one continued round of festivities; just as though there was some other line of business that would please him better than the one he was engaged in.

Spot confided to Sam the fact that he was greatly taken with the Italian's bear.

And Sam turned around so as to have a good chance to wink all to himself.

CHAPTER XXV.

It might not be said that Spot wanted the tame performing bear that the Italian had, but it is safe to say that he had much rather have him than his horse.

And the Italian evidently was in that condition of mind that he would attach himself to almost anything but the bear, and so it is not to be wondered at that when they began cautiously to compare notes that a bargain was reached, and that Spot swapped his fiery steed for the performing bear, thinking that after all he might sell him for enough to realize what he had hoped to get for his horse.

Sam had quietly sanctioned the thing, although Spot had not really told him in so many words that he thought of it.

But early the next morning that Italian mounted his swap and immediately run away with in the direction of New York, but as that was exactly the way he wanted to go, and as he had the faculty of eluding all, he raised not the slightest objections, feel-

"Sell him fo' money. Oh, you bet dat I get hunk fo' de cash dat hoss cost me."

"Oh, you will, hey?"

"Don you forgot it, boss."

"What can he do?"

"Do mos' eberything. You oughten see him play champion Sullivan."

"Did the Italian spar with him?"

"Cose he did. It wur great fun."

"Well, I should like to see him spar," replied the landlord, and just then Sam Spry joined them.

"Hello Spot, Where's your horse?"

"Dar he am," replied Spot, proudly, as he pointed to the tame bear.

"What! Did you swap your kicker for that bear? Well, I'll be hanged."

"Yes, an' fo' dis time dat Italian am half de way to New York or dead by de roadside," replied Spot, laughing heartily.

"You had better have kept the horse and bought the bear right out, then you would have had something to feed him on."

"Dat's all right. I's gwine ober heah to de butcher's to get him some meat," said he, starting off resolutely.

Sam and the landlord enjoyed a good laugh while he was gone, and on taking a closer look at the bear it was very evident that he stood very much in need of being internally upholstered with meat or something else.

Spot soon returned with a pound of cat meat—just about a good mouthful for the beast.

"What did you buy so much for?" asked Sam, as he and the landlord swapped winks.

"Oh, I b'leaves in feedin' animals well," said he, throwing the meat down before him.

The bear snapped it up, paper and all, about as quick as a hen would have collared a grasshopper. He didn't even growl, as bears generally do when eating anything, but looked up earnestly for more.

"You want at least ten pounds of meat for that bear," said the landlord.

"Ten pounds!"

"Yes, ten pounds three times a day," added Sam, at which Spot opened his eyes.

"Why, dat cost mo' den a hoss," said he.

"Of course it does. Costs as much to keep a bear as it does four horses."

"Oh, Lord—oh, my!" he groaned.

"And if you don't give him all he wants he's liable to eat you, or some sheep, which you will have to pay for."

"Oh, Lord—oh, my! No wonder dat he want to swap him fo' a hoss," he muttered, and away he started for some more meat.

But he only invested in five pounds more, and even that made him feel poor and sad.

That bear jumped for it so ferociously that it nearly frightened the life out of Spot, and the growls uttered over the repeat frightened also every animal on the premises.

But he got away with it surprisingly quick, and stood licking his chops and winking at his new master for more.

"You gets no mo', an' dat's got to last you fo' one day at least," said he, at which the bear gave a savage growl.

"Now put him through some tricks," said Sam, intent on having some fun.

"Yes, make him show his sparring science," added the landlord.

"Oh, you may bet that he's a good bear if he can get away with Spot in sparring, for he has downed some of the best in the land," said Sam, half aside, but so that Spot could overhear him.

"All right. Put him through his courses the same as the Italian did," said the landlord.

"What I know 'bout sparrin' wid a bar?"

"Oh, I'll risk you. They box just the same as Sullivan does, and you know you always said that you wanted a piece of him," said Sam.

Thus encouraged, Spot walked up to the bear and put himself into boxing attitude, at which Bruin rose upon his hind legs and did the same thing, as he had been trained to do.

It was a comical sight, but Spot evidently felt much better than he would had the bear not been chained, for now he could dance out of Bruin's way after getting in his work.

Spot pranced around for some time, as if watching for an opening, and it made the spectators laugh to see the bear do the same thing.

Finally Spot became bolder, and to show his science still more, as well as his fearlessness, he gave Bruin a slap alongside of his jaw, hard enough to make him shake his head and utter a good-sized growl.

"Go for him, Spot!" cried Sam.

"Yes, it will make him afraid of you, so that you can manage him easily," said the landlord, earnestly.

Again did Spot dance around the bear, and once more the bear danced before him.

"Oh, you're a boxer, eh? Take dat!" he said, again getting in one on the bear's mug, much to the delight of the spectators, several more of whom had come to see the sport.

Once the bear gave his guard a whack with his powerful paw that knocked it down, but Spot managed to give him a whack alongside of his conk at the same time.

It was getting awful funny for the spectators as well as Spot, but it somehow didn't seem a bit funny for the bear, whose former master had evidently never hit him a hard blow. He growled and showed his teeth, but Spot gave him two or three good ones, for which he was cheered by the on-lookers.

"Oh, come see me! Come hab some fun wid me!" cried Spot, dancing out of reach the greater part of the time and getting in a good showing of blows with seeming ease. "Come see me!" he cried again because the crowd laughed.

Bruin seemed willing and even anxious to do so, for he pulled fiercely at his chain and showed a fine set of teeth for the meat business.

Spot was winning more laurels than ever Sullivan did. Sam was thinking that most likely the bear would get square on some other occasion, when all of a sudden the chain snapped and the enraged brute sprang toward Spot.

Uttering a yell of dismay, that coon made a break for somewhere else, as did the spectators who had been enjoying the set-to.

Over the first convenient fence he went like a wild-eyed, frightened deer, closely followed by the bear.

Murder was no name for what he yelled.

Even Sam was frightened for his man, and whipping out his revolver, he ran in pursuit of the late antagonists, while the landlord ran to get his gun, and the utmost excitement was manifested all over the neighborhood.

"Murder! murder!" yelled Spot. "Help, help! Shoot him, shoot him!" and the bear got near enough to claw the seat out of his trousers just as he was vaulting over another fence.

Then Sam treated him to a bullet, while he was waiting to see if there was any meat in Spot's trousers.

ers, at which he turned and went for him, leaving Spot a chance to leap into the highway and run for dear life.

Sam gave him another pill, seeing that he seemed anxious for it, and then he retreated so as to give the landlord a chance to fill his hide full of buckshot holes.

That being a larger dose than he had yet received, seemed to discourage him, and after attempting to stand up some more, he concluded that lying down to take his pills was easier.

Sam gave him another one, and then he weakened. He was a good bear then, but not worth a cent at doing tricks. He was tired.

A great crowd gathered around the defunct, but Spot was not among them, nor was he much missed, so long as the bear had been rendered harmless, but there was great excitement.

However, they found Spot not long afterward in the top of a tree where he had climbed for safety, but the life was nearly frightened out of him.

"Come down out of that!" called Sam.

"Oh, my, whar dat bar?" moaned Spot, at which there was a loud laugh.

"He's dead, so come down," said Sam.

"Oh, my, oh, yes!" he moaned, and began slowly to descend.

But he was a sight to behold, with his clothes nearly all torn off, and his eyes bulging out, and they gave him the grand laugh all around.

And what a sick man he was!

There lay the last of his horse trade with all that good meat inside of his skin, besides the ruin he had yet to pay for. Oh, he wanted to go off somewhere and die!

But Sam braced him up and encouraged him with a new suit of clothes, and finally made a dicker with the landlord to take the carcass of the bear in payment for the damage the horse had wrought in the barn.

Of course the affair became the laughing talk of the town, but they soon got out of that and into the next one in the pursuit of business.

But you needn't bet a nickel that Spot ever indulged in any more trades and speculations, for you would lose. No, he was a sad and weary coon, and from that time forth attended strictly to business.

And so did Sam Spry, although, of course, he had his fun as he went along, and Spot was occasionally tapped for that purpose.

That circuit kept them on the road for two months before it was finished, and he found that the money he made at the lightning-rod business knocked dry-goods drumming right out of water, besides affording quite as much fun.

But finally the season was over, for you can't sell a lightning-rod when there is no danger from lightning, and being on the road home to New York once more, he concluded to give it up until the next year, and, in the meantime, do something else—perhaps try drumming again.

But he had something else in view for the future that perhaps the reader does not dream of, and he felt as jolly as a big sunflower after closing up business and they were on the road back to New York.

It generally makes a New Yorker feel first-rate after a long absence from home to find himself on the road back to it again, but Sam Spry felt unusually jolly because of something else.

And Spot began to act like himself again, for he was also going back to New York, and his old haunts and friends, with the prospect of little or nothing to do during the winter, as Sam had assured him of a good job in the spring, and that he would take good care of him during the winter.

"Oh, maybe not?" he would chuckle to himself while thinking of it, and thinking also of the yarns he would have to astonish his colored friends with.

They were out altogether nearly three months, but during this time don't forget that Sam Spry was in communication with his friends, and knew exactly how the land lay in more places than one.

And on his arrival home, he received a grand reception from Smith, his employer, and congratulated muchly upon the success that had attended him on his first trip.

And his old friends at Jub & Spud's gave him a hearty welcome, and a supper on his return, at which he kept them in convulsions nearly all night, relating the adventures of Spot, who always had been a source of fun, but never thoroughly developed until now.

But the old friends of the store were not the only ones to welcome him home, for none of them could have greater admiration for the handsome drummer than did Mr. Spud, the junior member of the firm.

"Come right home with me, my boy. It's all right. I understand it. I was a youngster once myself. It's all right. Of course you know all about it, and don't care a bent pin for what old Jub says. Come right along!" and, in spite of his gentle protests and blushes, the vivacious old merchant hustled him along toward his mansion.

I said that Sam blushed, so you must know that there was some occasion for it more than ordinary. It requires something very fine to bring the blush to a drummer's cheek.

And that "something very fine" was right there in Mr. Spud's house, visiting her friends, just as the sly rascal knew would be the case on this particular oc-

casion, being no less than the glad, beautiful, plump and blushing Annie Jub.

Nor was it any surprise to the Spud family to see Annie and Sam meet as engaged lovers, for they had known pretty well for some time which way the wind was blowing. They knew it was a south wind, laden with the perfume of flowers, and they were pleased with the prospect.

Mr. Spud and his wife were delighted, as well as his children, for they detested old Jub and the moldy old money bags he was trying to marry his beautiful and only daughter to, and the prospect of his being bested in the game of love against ducats pleased them wonderfully.

That night while Sam was walking home with her certain arrangements were completed, for Annie had been secretly at work preparing for this a long time before.

The next day they met at Mr. Spud's house again, where a dozen or more of their friends were in waiting.

Presently some carriages arrived, and the entire party rode away to the residence of Rev. Dr. Houghton, who gracefully responded when asked by Sam Spry to make him and Annie Jub man and wife.

Then they rode back again to Mr. Spud's, where a wedding breakfast awaited them, and Mr. Spud felt so delighted that he wanted to dance.

Here Annie wrote her father a letter, while Sam was dispatching notices of the marriage to all the afternoon and next morning's papers.

This done, the happy couple took a carriage for the Grand Central Depot, where they started off on a month's honeymoon tour, followed by old shoes and the good wishes of everybody in the secret. And so we will leave them for the present and turn to old Jub.

As for his partner, Spud, he felt so much like dancing and cutting up that his wife wouldn't allow him to go to the store that day, for fear he would slip over, so he remained at home and pounded himself so as to keep from exploding over the thought of what a joke there was in store for Jub.

Jub was fretting all the forenoon and wondering why Spud didn't show up, and finally came to the conclusion that he must have had a party or something at his house the night before, and that he was probably suffering from it and he would have a good laugh at him the next day.

It was only a short time afterward when the first edition of the afternoon paper came in, and mechanically Mr. Jub picked it up and began to read the news.

And since having made up his mind to marry his daughter, he naturally glanced at the marriages to see how the market ranged.

All at once his eyes began to protrude, as he read the following notice:

"Married, by Rev. Dr. Houghton, at the parsonage, Samuel Spry to Annie, daughter of Abel Jub, Esq. No cards."

It is a wonder that he didn't rupture a blood-vessel before he got the strength to howl and yell and kick.

The first thing he did was to read that notice over again. Then he yelled and kicked over a chair; then he picked up the chair and threw it through the glass partition, creating a rush of employees to the scene, and a general consternation.

The old bookkeeper ventured to go into the private office to see what the trouble was, but Jub went at him like an infuriated bull at a red petticoat, kicking him out and calling for somebody else to kick.

Of course there was only one conclusion, and that was that the boss had gone off his nut, and they were about to send for an officer, when they heard him howl:

"My daughter, my only child, married to a lightning-rod peddler! Why don't the earth open and swallow me? Why don't somebody else come here and get kicked?"

Then they all took a tumble, and knew that Sam Spry had married the old man's daughter, and so they all went down in the cellar to laugh and shake hands over the hurrah. Big thing for Sam Spry!

Finally, after the irate father had howled and whooped around for about half an hour, he crushed his hat down over his head and started out to see about this terrible thing.

But wherever he went he found it perfectly regular and everybody glad of it, even his own wife, and he kicked himself until he hadn't strength enough to do so any more. Whenever he tried to get sympathy he got laughed at, at least by everybody but the old fossil who expected to marry Annie, and it threw him into a fit of sickness.

But there was no help for it, of course, and finally he was persuaded to make the best of it and send his blessing to the young couple, who were then at Niagara Falls.

"But I say, Spud," said he, a week or so after he had cooled down. "I can never have my son-in-law a lightning-rod agent, or even a drummer. What do you say?"

"Whv, take him right into the firm. We want some young blood in it, and it may not be long before I have a son-in-law to admit."

And Jub finally consented.

So, after the expiration of the honeymoon, there was a change in the firm name, so that it read Jub, Spud & Co.

All of which is respectfully submitted to the friends and admirers of SAM SPRY, THE NEW YORK DRUMMER.

[THE END.]

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